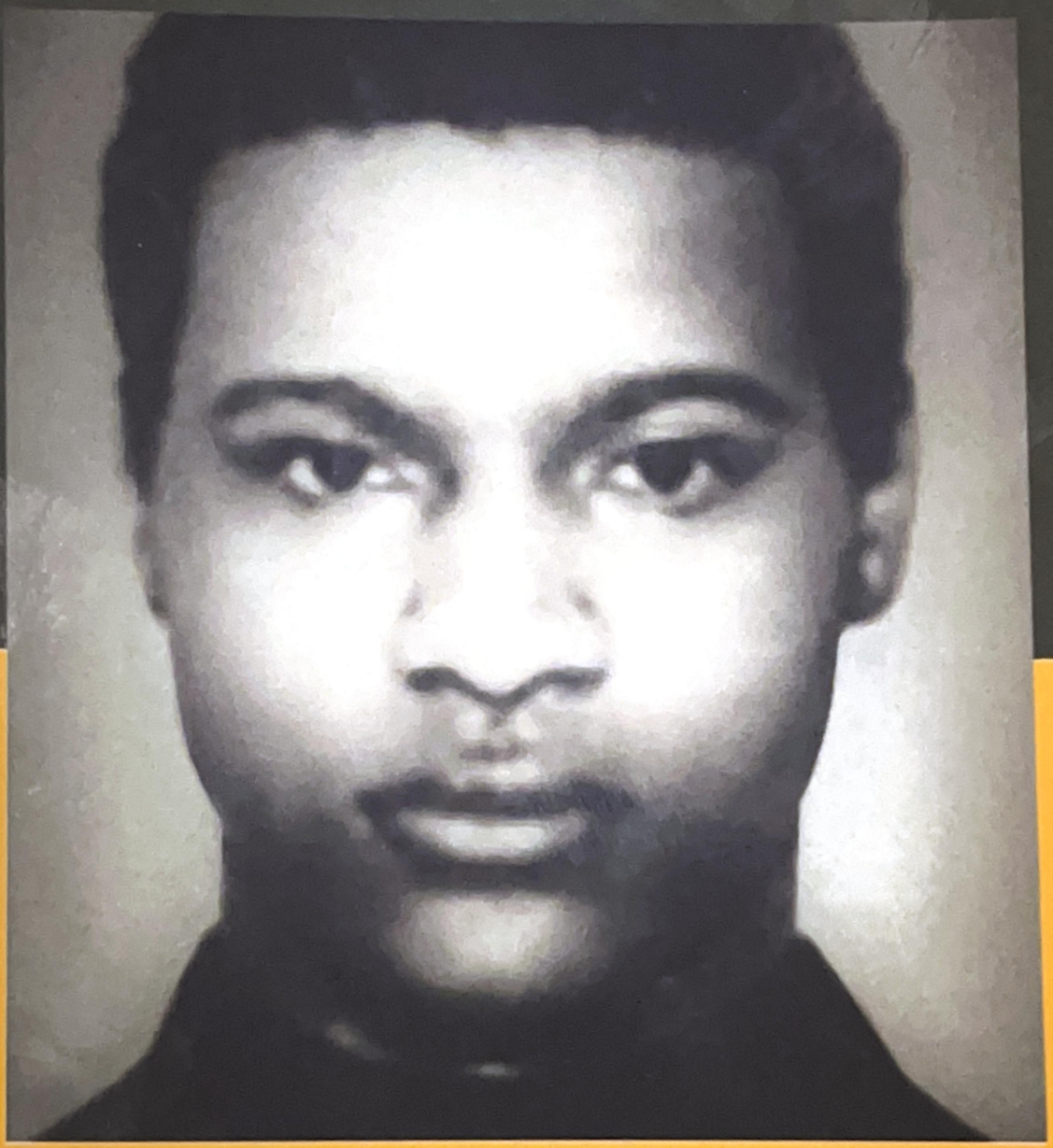
Gloria Clark Jackson



Mark Clark: Soul of a Black Panther

THRIFTBOOKS

Mark Clark: Soul of a Black Panther

Gloria Clark Jackson

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Mark Clark: Soul of a Black Panther is an original work of non-fiction: A true story written by Gloria Clark Jackson from her first hand knowledge, perspective, and experiences as the last living relative who joined the Peoria Black Panther Party under Mark Clark's leadership. Some names may have been omitted to protect the privacy of individuals. While the author has made every effort to provide accurate information, neither the publisher nor the author assumes any responsibility for any errors made, or any changes that may occur after publication.

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Dedications

This book is dedicated to all of the fallen comrades who have fought tirelessly for justice, freedom, and equality for all people: To the comrades who have endured unjust imprisonment or jail time in their fight for justice; and to all of those who will continue to fight for civil rights until the day will come when the stench and stigma of racism has been eradicated.

Acknowledgments

Deciding to write this book to honor my brother Mark and tell his story was one of the best decisions I have ever made. But none of this would have been possible had it not been for my dear family and friends.

My two sons, Michael and Clayte Jackson encouraged me to tell the story from the unique perspective of being a member of the Peoria Black Panther Party under Mark's leadership.

My beautiful daughters Camille and Felicia Jackson always gave me wonderful advice and encouraged me to complete the book.

Two of my dear California friends, Stephen Stanley; and Pat Burley became great listening ears. They both were a great help to me by providing much needed feedback.

My sister Elner helped me obtain vital and much needed contact information from former Panther members; and my youngest sister Rose provided a photo image of Mark.

A special thanks to Pastor Felton Beck and Mr. Henry Howard for giving of their valuable

time to do personal interviews. Also, to my brother Matt who is now in heaven, for the beautiful article he wrote titled, Letter to a Panther.

Lastly, I want to thank the entire Clark family, and my two best friends, Marcia and Tina Blassingame whom I love so dearly.

Introduction

On December 4, 1969, an American civil rights activist, Defense Captain Mark Clark, leader of the Peoria, Illinois, Branch of the Black Panther Party, was assassinated. In addition to killing Mark, Chairman Fred Hampton, leader of the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party, was also assassinated.

As a former member of the Peoria Black Panther Party who joined under Mark's leadership, I was privy to certain Party information. Now, I want to share with the public my firsthand knowledge about my brother Mark and some hidden information that may have been overlooked or covered up regarding the deaths of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton.

For years I would convince myself to just let it be. I thought that surely by now most people already knew the inside details regarding the murders of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton by the Chicago police; so why would I need to write a book specifically about Mark.

It wasn't until two of my adult grand children came to me and began asking questions about the Black Panther Party, that I realized the significance of this book. As I proceeded to tell them some of my personal stories about Mark and what it was like being in the Black Panther Party, to my surprise, their reactions revealed just how oblivious they really were.

I began to realize how misinformed many of the youth are today regarding the past and what it was like growing up during the 60s. They all seemed to have a somewhat unrealistic super-hero version of the Black Panthers —most likely from watching movies.

As I sojourned ever so closer towards my 70th birthday, it became clear to me what I had to do. I needed to share with others my first hand knowledge and experiences that I had encountered while in the Black Panther Party and particularly what I knew about my brother Mark and why he went to Chicago.

Within this book, I will take you on a journey into the life and death of Defense Captain Mark Clark of the original Black Panther Party (BPP). You will get a sneak peek into Mark's life revealing his personality, his fearlessness, his leadership skills, and above all his dedication and unwavering commitment to the Party.

I will share with you my personal stories of growing up with Mark in the 60s; how Mark became the founder and leader of the Peoria, Illinois, Branch of the Black Panther Party; and why Defense Captain Mark Clark was in Chicago

on December 4th, 1969; which consequently, led to his death along with that of his close friend and comrade, Chairman Fred Hampton.

This book is my concerted effort to make sure that Mark's legacy is never forgotten nor lost to future generations. Mark was one of many fallen comrades who names are lesser known and rarely talked about: They were the real heroes of the revolution.

Some of these comrades are still serving life long prison sentences and have continued for over the past 50 years. Others were simply murdered in cold blood like sacrificial lambs that were willing to give their lives fighting for liberation. My brother, Defense Captain Mark Clark was one such person, and this—is his story.

1 A Family in Trauma

On December 4, 1969, breaking news flashed across every media outlet in the United States and showed the gruesome images of two young slain Black Panther leaders lying in a lake of blood. The massacres of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton were listed as "justifiable homicide" but would later be proven to be a premeditated plot to assassinate them.

Even though it happened over 50 years ago, that day was so surreal that it seemed just like yesterday to me. The news of Mark's death hit the pit of my gut like a Mack truck that had over turned and now was lying helplessly on its side. That was a day that pierced me to my core—a day I wanted to forget—a day that traumatized our entire family for decades.

My mother had recently moved to Flint, Michigan, and winter had just begun to set in. The chilling air was beginning to seep through our poorly insulated single paned windows of the modest three-bedroom house my mother was renting.

On that cold frigid day, I remember being in the kitchen washing dishes and cleaning the

house while my mother was preparing dinner and baking a cake. My younger siblings had just gotten home from school and they were playing around, running back and forth as they usually did.

Dinner was almost ready, and my mother had just removed her cake from the oven when suddenly, the phone rang. My brother James, who was still living in Peoria, had seen the disturbing images on television, and called to give my mother the devastating news.

As soon as my mother picked up the phone, the emotional pain showed in her body. She began taking short pants of breath that pushed out a groaning sound when she exhaled.

She grabbed the back of a chair and held on to it so that her noticeable shaking would not cause her to fall. Then she bent forward and let out a deep gut wrenching moan.

Sensing that something was terribly wrong, I began to run towards her.

"Momma, what's wrong!" I hollered.

"What happened?" I nervously asked.

She could hardly get the words out because of the persistent moaning that she was unable to control. Finally she shook her head back and forth as if to say "NO"! Tears pooled in her eyes as she rocked herself and slowly mumbled the words,

"They killed Mark! Oh, Lord help us! They killed my son!"

As she uttered those words, I stood there trembling in shock, inwardly hoping against hope that it was not true. Having been recruited by Mark into the Black Panther Party, I knew that he was putting his life at risk when he asked to be dropped off in Chicago. But in my own naivety, I really wasn't prepared for the reality of that decision. Now, our worse nightmares had come true: They had murdered Mark!

As the devastating news spread throughout the house, one by one each sibling broke down sobbing profusely. We were all hysterical! We were in pure agony!

The screaming sobs were only momentarily interrupted by the need to take a breath, and then it started all over again with more wailing and more screaming until pure exhaustion had set in.

The entire Clark family was in shock and we really didn't know what to do. All we knew is that somehow we had to console our mother and then console each other while in the mist of suffering our own personal grief and pain.

What made matters even worse was that death had become an unwelcome guest in the Clark family and had attached itself to us and just wouldn't let go.

Only 6 months prior, in May 1969, our father who had been the primary provider and head of the house, passed away from a heart attack at

the age of 61. My mother had decided to move to Flint, Michigan, to recover from that devastating loss and was now a widow raising six school aged children by herself.

At the time, I was 19 years old and raising a one-year-old son after being separated from my now ex-husband. Looking back on that now, I can only imagine how much hurt and pain my mother must have felt after losing her husband of over 40 years.

In addition to that, as if that was not bad enough, in November 1968, just 6 months prior to my father dying, our wonderful, loving grandmother who helped raise us and who had lived with us for most of my life, passed away.

Until then we had never experienced death in our family. Now, we were being tormented with it! We were still grieving over these two major figures in our lives when Mark was shot in the heart and killed. It was just too much to handle: It was just too much!

The only consolation that would come that cold wintry day on December 4, 1969, was our own determination to find out exactly what had happened to Mark. We wanted answers: We wanted to know why Mark was murdered in cold blood. But for now, all we could do—was grieve!

2 A Strong Foundation

Being raised in the Clark family, we were all blessed with a strong and stable foundation that began with our beautiful mother Fannie Mae Clark. Momma was a soft-spoken, confident, even-tempered woman who took everything in stride and always seemed to remain calm even in the midst of chaos—a lot of chaos.

During mom's younger years, she worked part time as a maid for a wealthy white lady who lived in an upper class neighborhood on Grandview Drive in Peoria, Illinois. I never met Mrs. Gury, but my mother worked for her for many years. All I remember is that during the holidays, she would give mom gift baskets full of fruit, nuts, and toys.

Our father was the cornerstone and the glue that held our family together. He was a devoted, hardworking, principled black man that showed his love by action rather than by words. Although he was a very strict disciplinarian, he brought stability to the family which we definitely needed.

Daddy worked long hard hours in the foundry at Caterpillar Tractor Company as a molder. I can remember him coming home from work on many occasions filled with silica dust from head to toe.

Since my father was also the pastor and founder of his church, Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, he demanded that his children be in church sitting in a pew every time the doors opened. That meant going to church at least three times a week, and twice on Sundays.

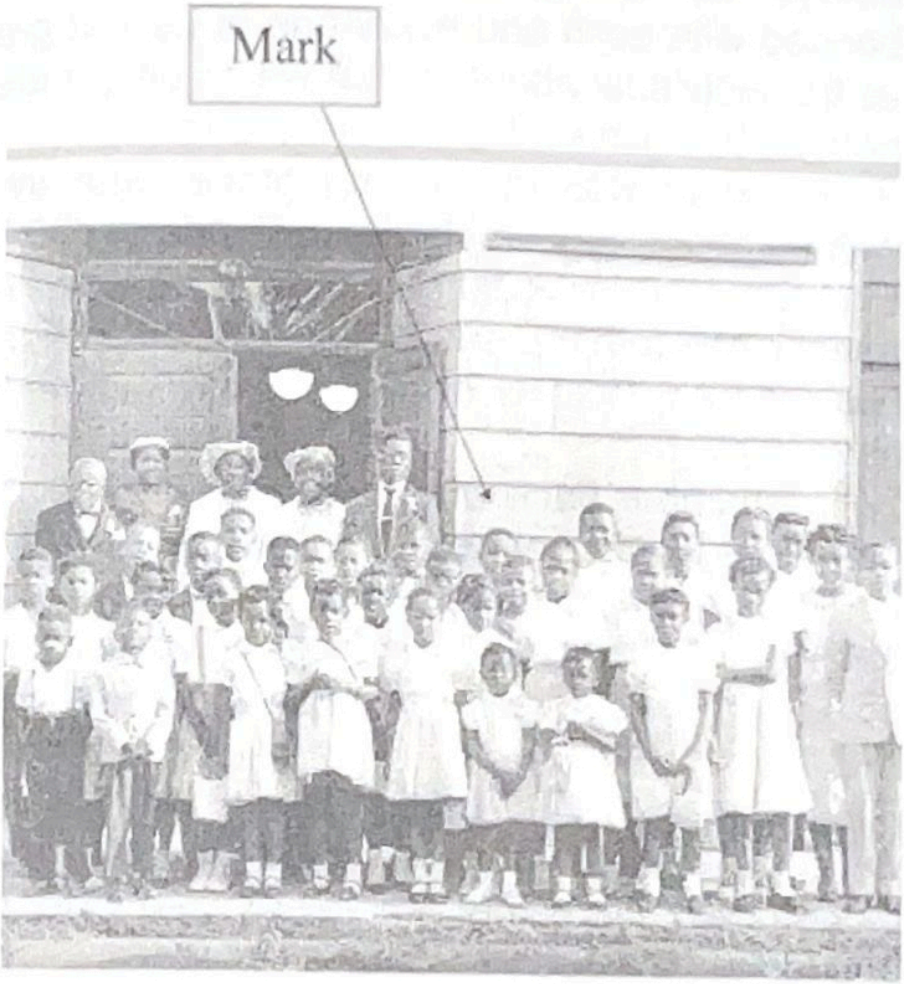
From the time that we could walk, every Saturday morning, the Clark children would get up and get dressed to be at church for our Sunshine Band Service which originally began at our former church located on Lincoln Street.

The Sunshine Band was organized by the women's department as a children's ministry. Its mission was to provide a spiritual foundation based on biblical principles and values.

Mark, like all of the Clark children, attended Sunshine Band regularly where we learned to cultivate Christian virtues, and build good moral character. Our favorite children's theme song which we sang on special occasions was, "Jesus Loves the Little Children."

"Jesus Loves the Little Children
All the Children of the World
Red and Yellow Black and White
They are Precious in His sight
For He Loves the Little Children of the World"

The lyrics were so poignant because it helped us to cement our belief in equality towards all people; regardless of race, ethnicity, or gender. We learned from a very early age that justice can only be accomplished when everyone is treated equally and fairly.



Lincoln Street Church of God in Christ Sunshine Band

Even as a young child, Mark was not afraid to stand up for what he believed. He fully

understood and practiced the concept of being his brother's keeper. Over and over again, I watched as Mark would show disapproval towards anyone, regardless of their size, that he felt was treating others unfairly.

Our grandmother was such a beautiful spirit; always so loving, kind, and gracious. She bonded with each and every one of us and gave us the individual attention that we so desperately needed being in such an enormous family.

Grandma was our saving grace. She lived with us at our very first home in Peoria at 723 W. First Street. She would take care of us when my mother and father were at work or doing church business on the few occasions when we didn't have to go.

I remember back when we were very young, Grandma would boil water on the stove to give us a warm bath in a tub basin. She would have each one of us line up so she could scrub us down with castile soap to make sure we were clean.

Like many other blacks during the 60s, we were considered poor or lower income even though both my mother and father were fortunate enough to have jobs.

We lived in a large old out dated house that had a few blades of grass spewed about the yard. We wore hand-me-down clothes and had a few used toys to play with; and we occasionally had to eat wild game meat that my daddy had caught while hunting.

But regardless of what we had or didn't have in the way of luxuries, we had one very important thing—we had a big loving stable family. And because of my father's stellar reputation as a great pastor and a devoted father, we were a well known and well respected family in the Peoria community.

3 Born To Be Free

Mark Clark was born at Saint Francis hospital in Peoria, Illinois, on June 28, 1947. His name was taken from the bible—much like my mom had done with many of her other sons. Mark was the 9th child born from the union of Missionary Fannie Mae Clark and Pastor William Clark Sr.

By the time Mark arrived on the scene, the Clark family was already well underway. With the addition of Mark, there were now seven boys and two girls. However, the Clark family was far from being finished. It seemed like almost every year or so, another sibling would pop up. After Mark, my sister Elner came along, and then, I arrived the following year as the 11th child.

As time went by, my mom continued to have more children which was fairly common for people of color during the 50s and 60s. Believe me, there were several other families in Peoria who competed for the biggest family title.

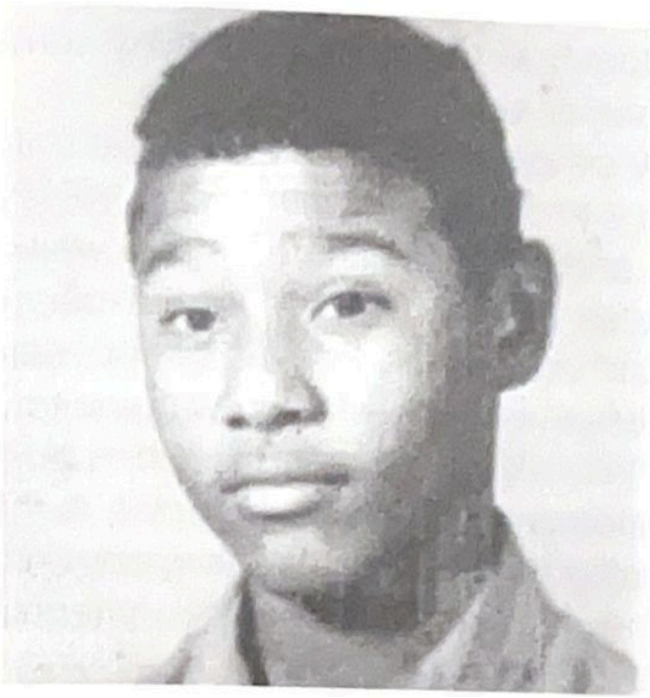
I remember one day my mother gathering some of us together to jokingly ask the dreaded question.

"Do ya'll want another brother or sister?" she said.

And like clockwork we would all holler as loud as we could with a frown on our face, in unison, "NO!"
Of course by then that meant that she was already carrying another child. And when it was all said and done, my mother had given birth to 18 children; one named Timothy who died shortly after birth. Siblings in order of birth are:

1. Ella Mae
2. William Jr.
3. Samuel
4. James
5. Matthew
6. George
7. Charles
8. Patricia
9. Mark
10. Elner
11. Gloria
12. Joseph
13. Kay
14. Luke
15. John
16. Timothy
17. Robert
18. Rose

My earliest memory of my brother Mark was when I was about 5 years old and Mark was around 8. What I didn't know then was that Mark had a talent for observing people and he instinctively knew the art of listening.



Young Mark Clark

One day, my mother brought home a doll that the lady she worked for had given her. All the girls were so excited to see it and we could hardly wait to play with it. The problem was there was only one doll and three of Mark's sisters who wanted it.

It was a brand new white doll still in the box; something that we had never had before. Until then, all of our dolls had been used and by the time we got them; their hair had been cut short with uneven plugs and they were missing parts of their clothing and shoes.

As odd as it may seem now, during the 60s, black dolls were very rare to see. In fact, at the time, I had never even seen one.

Sensing that there might be a problem, our mom gave us a few simple instructions—either

play together or each of you take turns. But that was easier said than done.

My sisters grabbed the doll first before I could get to it and began playing with it. They would go back and forth taking turns, all while changing the rules as they went along so they could play with the doll a little longer. I kept waiting for my turn, which I felt was taking way too long.

Finally, I got impatient and started pouting and stomping my feet. When I didn't get any sympathy from them, I just gave up. I stormed off and ran into the living room and sat in a corner all by myself.

By the time Mark came in the room, I was all balled up on the floor still sniffling and pouting when he came over to me and calmly asked me what was wrong. I remember looking up at him with tears streaming down my cheeks as I cried out,

"They won't let me play with the doll."

Mark looked me straight in my eyes and just listened attentively and then he got up and walked away. But there was something about his presence that was calming and reassuring: It could have just been the fact that someone had actually listened to me. All I know is that I remember feeling better.

I thought that was the end of it, but a few minutes later Mark came back in the living room and handed me a crumpled up piece of candy

that he had kept stashed away. All he said to me was,

"Now stop crying."

I had many brothers that had very unique personalities, but Mark always stood out as a peacemaker and a mediator who always knew how to keep his composure in a crisis.

As I look back on that, I realize that even as a child, Mark always had a calm, quiet spirit about himself; not because he was shy, but because he was reserved and self-assured.

Mark was born to be free. He was a person who danced to his own tune. The unique thing about Mark is that he never spoke a bunch of idle words. So when he did speak, he did it with such conviction that you knew it came from his heart.

From that point on, I looked up to Mark as my protector. I could sense that he was someone very special—someone who was kind, considerate, and understanding—someone who had genuine compassion for others.

4 Childhood Memories

There were many things about Mark that I truly admired. His core personality was that he never enjoyed seeing unfairness of any kind, and he always looked out for the underdog.

There was something about Mark that drew people to him. He was the kind of guy who was very popular but modest about it. I think the fact that he had been gifted with so many talents and skills that it was hard not to like him.

One time I remember seeing Mark make a dart set by taking old wooden clothes pins and sticking needles into the heads. He was so creative, and I was always amazed at the things that he could do.

But I guess having all of that talent comes with a price because Mark was not always so easy to get along with. The truth is Mark was a no-nonsense kind of guy. He was very tenacious and stubborn. When he said something, he meant it and once he made up his mind; there was nothing that you could do to change it.

If Mark asked you to do something, he gave you two choices: You can either do it willingly, or you can do it with his persuasion; but one way or the other you are going to do it. Which reminds me of one of my most unforgettable memories about my brother Mark: It was the time Mark made me fight a boy.

My younger brother Joseph and I were attending Lincoln Elementary School in Peoria, Illinois. One day, Joseph came home from school with a bloody nose and said a fourth grader had jumped on him. As fate would have it, I was in the fourth grade and Joseph was only in the third.

When Mark got home and found out that Joseph had been jumped on, there was no way that he was going to let it slide. Mark always believed in a fair fight, and since I was in the fourth grade, he came straight to me and said,

"Glo, tomorrow when you get out of school, you are going to fight the boy who jumped on Joseph."

It was just like that! He didn't ask me: He told me what I was going to do. There was no discussion about it. Of course I felt sorry for Joseph, but I didn't want to fight a boy; especially when the boy hadn't done anything to me.

Truth be told, being that I was a maturing girl, it intimidated me to fight a boy. So I stood there trying my best to convince Mark to let it go. I starting saying things like,

"Joseph probably started it."
"You know he always doing something."

But nothing I would say would sway Mark in any way. I think it was the principle of the thing. Mark lived on principles! He always believed that if you let a person get away with something, they would eventually try to do it again. Finally, after a short debate, Mark just said,

"You can either fight the boy or you can fight me. What's it gonna be?"

Needless to say, I chose the boy. One of Mark's other great talents was that he was an excellent boxer. He had been doing some amateur boxing and had gained a reputation around Peoria of being a person that you never want to mess with.

That evening Mark showed me a few moves and prepped me on what to do. The next day after school got out, I walked up to the boy who had socked Joseph and I gave him a bloody nose. When I got home from school, the rumor had already spread and everyone was talking about it.

I could tell that Mark was proud of me for following his instructions. Of course, I didn't fight any more boys, but I did pay close attention to the things that Mark would do and say. From that point on, my relationship with my brother Mark was unbreakable.

Mark was always a man of fairness, which is why I believe he attracted so many loyal friends. Mark might have been stubborn and set in his ways, but his shinning quality was that he was always fair-minded.

By the time Mark attended Roosevelt Junior High; he was well liked and had lots of friends. Carver Community Center, a popular recreational facility in Peoria, became his after school hangout as it offered Mark the opportunity to express his talents in art, drama, and poetry.

Ms. Juliette Whittaker, Mark's instructor and mentor at Carver Center, helped inspire the creativity in Mark. Mark could draw portraits, paint, carve, and make just about anything with his hands. Ms. Whittaker encouraged all the youth in Peoria to reach for the stars, including the well-known famous comedian, Mr. Richard Pryor.

As Mark continued to mature, he became even more determined in all of his pursuits. Mark was confident, bold, and fearless. As I was speaking to Pastor Felton Beck, one of Mark's childhood friends who attended my dad's church; he recalled a time when he saw Mark fight off a vicious dog. This is what Pastor Beck had to say about Mark:

"Mark should have been a boxer. He could really box. He had some of the fastest hands and feet I had ever seen. One time we were walking home from school and a big German Shepard came charging after us. All of us ran except for Mark.

When we looked back, Mark had braced himself and was standing his ground. Mark was bold, and he had no fear! Whenever the dog would try to come at him, Mark would give the dog a karate kick. Mark was so quick that the dog couldn't bite him. Finally the dog just gave up and walked away."

5 Living in Two Americas

Growing up in a Christian environment, Mark developed a clear understanding of good and evil; right and wrong. In our family, we were all taught to treat everybody right; but we couldn't understand why, as people of color, we were not always treated the same in return. Like so many in the black community, we were reminded of this irony on a daily basis.

It was as if there were two Americas: One that many whites enjoyed that was based on this notion of democracy and freedom for all; and one that was built on slavery and Jim Crow laws that promoted a system of oppression towards blacks and other minorities.

For blacks in America who wanted equality, the inevitable result could only be retaliation with rioting, sit-ins, marches, and boycotts, which had become a common theme during the 60s.

The Clark family lived in a fairly integrated neighborhood where there was a white family that lived next door to us, and an Italian and

Sicilian store at each corner of the block that served the entire community.

They were very amiable people who always treated our family well. However, the city and country itself was far from integrated. Most blacks, including our family, were confined to certain areas mainly on the south side of Peoria or in the projects.

Back then, suburbs like East Peoria, Pekin, and Morton were all-white neighborhoods and often when blacks would seek employment in those areas, they would come back telling everyone how they were accosted by a gang of whites who spit on them, call them nigger, and told them to go home.

To make matters worse, the nearly all-white police department offered little protection and would often chastise blacks even further with questions of why they were in an area where they didn't belong.

In May 1963, the entire nation watched as police officers in Birmingham, Alabama let loose vicious snarling dogs to bite and chew at the flesh of black men, women, and children while television cameras broadcasted the brutal events to the rest of the country.

During the protest, the Press reported that, "A Negro woman was bitten on the leg by a police dog. A Negro man had four or five deep gashes on his leg where he had been bitten by a dog, and a sobbing Negro woman said she had been kicked in the stomach by a policeman."

In the 1960s, blacks were still chained to the remnants of slavery. It seemed that every time blacks protested against discrimination, they were punished for wanting justice and equality.

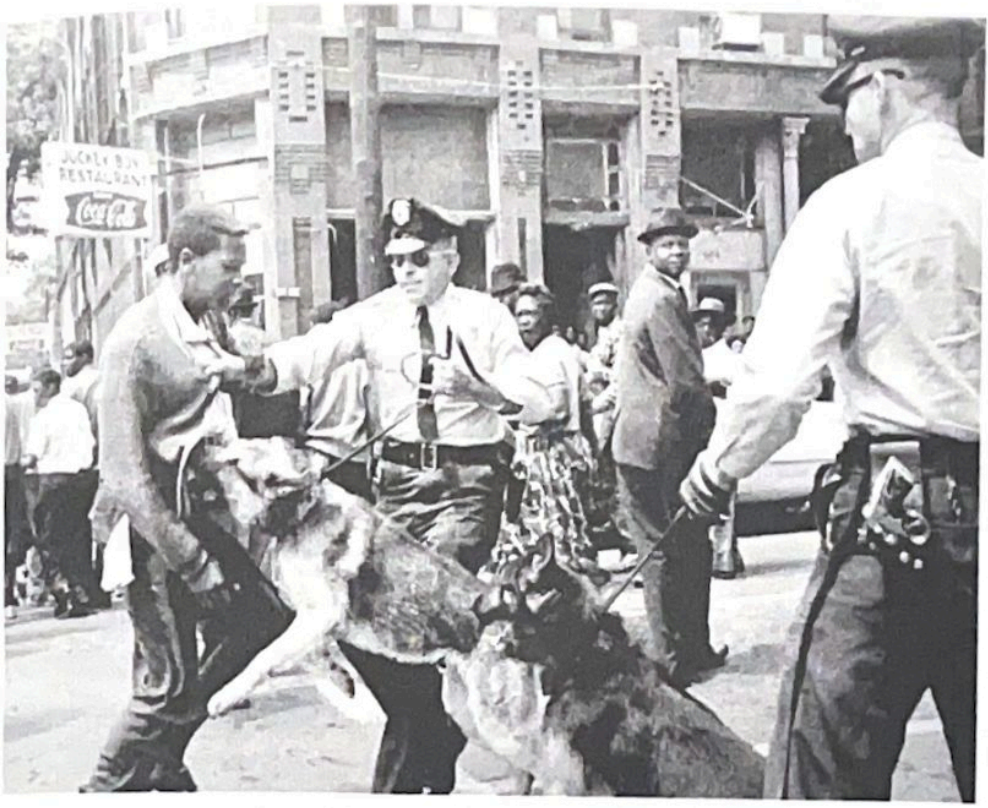


Photo by Bill Hudson, New York Times, shows a 17-year-old protester being attacked by dogs. That was the America that we lived in: That was the America that we knew. Mark had simply had enough. So at the age of 15, Mark became a man. He stood up and took his place as a black leader in Peoria, Illinois, and joined the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, better known as the NAACP

Under the guidance and leadership of the local NAACP president John Gwynn and the Illinois NAACP vice president Reverend Blaine Ramsey, Mark became a well respected and well-known community activist in Peoria.

In August of 1963, Mark and a group of other NAACP activist traveled to Washington DC and joined in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous, "I Have a Dream," speech in front of the Lincoln Memorial.

In addition, the civil rights movement in Peoria had been sparked by a successful bus boycott conducted by the NAACP. Even though blacks and whites had long ridden together on city busses, there were very few black bus drivers.

The local NAACP chapter demanded that Peoria's City Hall open up more positions to blacks. After the NAACP spearheaded the bus boycott that was aimed at forcing the bus company to hire black drivers; they picketed the power company for having only two black employees on a payroll of 600.

The Illinois NAACP vice president Blaine Ramsey stated in the Peoria Journal Star newspaper that, "For a city pledged to progress, it seems paradoxical that such unfair employment practices could go unnoticed."

Once Mark began boycotting racist establishments, he became a target by the Peoria police department. On a couple of occasions, he was picked up, beaten, and thrown in the county jail on bogus charges.

The Peoria police dept had a long history of racial and ethnic intimidation. In fact, many in the Peoria police dept were known to be Ku Klux Klan (KKK) members who constantly harassed young black boys whenever they saw them.

It had become a common practice for young black boys in Peoria to get harassed, beaten and arrested by the police for minor infractions. It was almost as if blacks were living in an armed militarized police state.

By the time Mark began Roosevelt Jr. High, he had become socially and politically aware of the inequity that America afforded to blacks. So as soon as he began Manual High School, he quickly recognized that there were no books that promoted black history or major black achievements.

Mark was instrumental in organizing a boycott to demand African American history books be provided in the Manual High School curriculum. Until then, black history mainly focused on slavery and a few modest black innovators.

After attending Manual High, Mark took a course at Illinois Central College (ICC) in East Peoria where he studied African American History. He became active in the Black Student Union and worked tirelessly to raise the consciousness of Peorians to the social, political, and economic climate which existed at that time.

6 White Supremacy-Racism Ruled

Talking about white supremacy is a difficult subject to approach, mainly because not all whites are racist. Most are decent loving people. However, many still don't quite understand why is it that blacks cringe at the thought of whites waving confederate flags or boasting Nazi swastikas. What is it about those symbols that create anxiety for blacks?

In order to fully understand the emotions attached to those symbols, and why people like Mark Clark would resort to joining a political organization such as the Black Panther Party (BPP); one would first have to understand the history of America since its conception.

Immediately after the 13th Amendment was ratified in 1865, which abolished slavery in the United States, the roots of Jim Crow laws were established and took over.

Jim Crow laws were created as state and local statutes that legalized racial segregation which were meant to marginalize African

Americans by denying them the right to vote, hold jobs, get a good education, and be considered for advancement opportunities.

Anyone who attempted to defy Jim Crow laws often faced arrest, fines, jail sentences, violence, and death. It seemed that for as many white Americans who abhorred slavery there were just as many who profited through Jim Crow laws.

The most ruthless organization of the Jim Crow era was the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). It was created in 1865 in Pulaski, Tennessee, as a private club for Confederate veterans. (The confederate flag was their symbol.)

The KKK grew into a secret vigilante society by terrorizing blacks and lynching them from trees. The practice seeped into white Southern culture as a norm. It had members at the highest levels of government to the poorest level on the economic scale.

By 1950, black Americans had organized the Civil Rights Movement to end racial discrimination and to gain equal rights under the law. It was a horrifying and frightening struggle for blacks to experience.

Blacks were constantly terrorized and treated as less than human. One of the greatest tragedies that propelled the Civil Rights Movement forward was the murder of young Emmett Louis Till.

In August1955, 14-year-old Emmett Till was brutally lynched, and his face was mutilated after he was accused of offending a white woman in her family's grocery store.

Because Emmett Till's face was so disfigured and unrecognizable, his grieving mother decided to have an open-casket funeral, so everyone could see exactly what the murderers had done to her once handsome son.

The brutality of this young boy's death outraged the African-American community throughout the nation. The fact that his killers, who had come and abducted him right in front of his family; and were later acquitted of all charges drew national attention from all across the country shining a light once again on America's long history of violence against blacks.

Photo by Los Angeles Sentinel

Emmett Till Before Emmett Till After

Segregation had become a powerful tool that had been used to keep our nation divided and unequal. For blacks, America was not a place of liberty and justice for all: It was a place of hatred and guile that was perpetrated against blacks as racial intimidation.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK), an American minister and activist, became the most visible leader in the Civil Rights Movement by advocating non-violent resistance.

In 1955, he led the Montgomery bus boycott. Then on August 1963, he helped organize the March on Washington for jobs and freedom where he delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

By the early 1960s, things had boiled over to the point that no one could ignore what was going on any longer. In Birmingham, Alabama, the KKK was relentless in their terrorist attacks towards blacks committing over 20 bombings with no one ever being charged or arrested.

In June 1963, former President of the United States, John Fitzgerald Kennedy, did a televised address to the nation on the subject of civil rights. He spoke out publicly against racism and segregation, stating that it was a moral issue that was protected under the constitution. Sadly, less than 6 months later on November 22, 1963, John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

The KKK continued their reign of terror targeting anyone who opposed their racist beliefs. In September 1963, a group of racist Klansmen planted a bomb at The Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama.

The blast destroyed the church and killed four beautiful young girls while they were attending Sunday Service. Killed in the blast were 14-year-old Addie Mae Collins; 11-year-old Denise McNair; 14-year-old Carole Robertson; and 14-

year-old Cynthia Wesley. Targeting black churches meant that now blacks had no place to feel safe in America.

(Photo via Wikipedia)

In June 1964, three young Civil Rights activist were murdered by a mob of Klansmen in Neshoba County, Mississippi. The men had been working to help register blacks to vote. The murders of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were dubbed the Mississippi Burning murders.

On July 2, 1964, The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted and outlawed discrimination based

on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. It also prohibited unfair voter registration requirements, and racial segregation in schools, employment, and public accommodations.

By October 1964, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. received the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent stance in combating racial inequality. Then in 1965, Dr. King led another nonviolent protest in which they marched from Selma, to Montgomery, Alabama.

However, during that same time period, the director of the FBI, J. Edgar Hoover, considered King to be a radical. He placed King's name on a list for surveillance, making King an object of the FBI's Counter Intelligence Program, now known and commonly called (COINTELPRO)

In addition, the FBI had long been doing surveillance on Malcolm X, an African-American Muslim minister and human rights activist. Malcolm X was born Malcolm Little in Omaha, Nebraska, and changed his name when he joined the Nation of Islam.

Malcolm X was a straight forward an unapologetic speaker. He rejected the strategy of non-violence that King promoted, and argued that black people should defend and advance themselves "by any means necessary."

Many African Americans felt that Malcolm X articulated their complaints better than those in the civil rights movement. But after many years with the Nation of Islam, Malcolm X split with the Nation due to a dispute, and established his own following.

On February 21, 1965, Malcolm X was assassinated. Three members from the Nation of Islam were convicted of his murder and sentenced to life. According to current documentaries, there has long been speculation that the FBI may have also played a role in his death.

7 The Black Panther Party

Although the Black Panther Party's success was relatively short-lived, there can be no doubt that the Black Panther Party became one of the most powerful and memorable revolutionary forces that would challenge the ugly truth of America's racist past and make the whole world stand and take notice.

In October 1966 in Oakland, California, two young college men, Huey P. Newton and Bobbie Seale, started the Black Panther Party for Self Defense which was later shortened to simply, Black Panther Party (BPP).

From the very inception of the BPP, their primary purpose was to patrol African American neighborhoods to protect residents from acts of police brutality. Later on it became a political organization that was aimed at achieving self determination and economic empowerment for blacks and other minorities.

The first thing the BPP did was to establish a plan that set out the goals for the organization. They called it the Ten-Point Program.

The Ten-Point Program included demands for freedom, employment, land, housing, education, justice, and peace. Within the Ten-Point Program, the BPP demanded reparations for blacks as restitution for slave labor and the mass murder of blacks. It pointed out that slaves were denied 40 acres and 2 mules that were promised to them over 100 years ago.

The economic and political grievances written into the Ten-Point Program were titled, "What We Want, What We Believe". (Image by Basics Community News Service.)

October 1966
Black Panther Party
Platform and Program

What We Want
What We Believe

The Ten Point program went on to say that if Germans can pay the Jews for their genocide;

surely America can pay black Americans for their ancestors forced imprisonment and free slave labor that built and promoted the American economy.

After setting up the goals of the Ten-Point Program, the BPP learned from a study done on nutrition that breakfast was the most important meal of the day; so they launched the very first free Breakfast Program for children in the United States.

They would begin preparing meals two hours before school so they could serve a warm breakfast to under-privileged children in the community.

In addition to the breakfast program, the BPP also organized dozens of other community programs such as free health clinics, and shoes for children all of which became the blueprint for every Chapter and Branch throughout the country.

By the summer of 1967, being treated as less than human had taken its toll. African Americans had become tired of being told to wait for freedom, justice, and equality. Blacks stood up against a racist system of injustice and said, no more!

All across the United States, over 150 race riots broke out. The most destructive riots of the summer took place in Newark, New Jersey and Detroit, Michigan. In Newark, after four days of rioting, 26 people were killed and hundreds injured. In Detroit, the rioting left 43 died, over a

thousand injured, and millions of dollars in property damage.

Then, less than a year later, on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated. The entire black community was shocked! After King's assassination, riots broke out once again all across the nation.

The fact that King was known to be a peaceful leader who only professed nonviolence was the last straw for many. Then just two days later, on April 6, 1968, 17-year-old little Bobby Hutton, one of the first members of the Black Panther Party was killed after surrendering with hands up to the Oakland County Police.

After the murders of Martin Luther King Jr. and young Bobby Hutton, the Black Panther Party began to quickly grow. The BPP felt that it was time to take matters into their own hands. They decided that it was their God given right to defend themselves from police brutality, just as Malcolm X had suggested—by any means necessary.

All across the United States, the rapid growth of the Black Panther Party opened up different positions and levels within the organization. The Central Committee became the top national level and the governing body of the Party.

The second tier was the regional level which consisted of "Chapters" that were set up in major cities. These Chapters were the main hub for receiving information from the Central Committee.

The third tier was the local level which consisted of "Branches" that were headed by Branch leaders from smaller cities.

Chicago was the Illinois State Chapter of the Black Panther Party and had the largest membership in Illinois. It was founded in 1967 by Bob Brown, an organizer for Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, better known as SNCC.

By November 1968, Bob Brown had left the Party. But by that time, a young charismatic man named Fred Hampton had joined the Chicago Chapter and attracted many with his powerful oratory skills.

Although Fred Hampton was not the top leader of the Chicago Chapter, his talent as a political organizer helped him to quickly rise to the top where he assumed the chairmanship position of the Illinois State Black Panther Party.

Approximately a month later, Mark Clark's destiny would also lead him to join.

8 Defense Captain Mark Clark

Around December 1968, a long-time family friend named Henry Howard, who was a member of the Black Panther Party in San Francisco, California, came to visit his family in Peoria, Illinois.

Henry had attended my father's church as a child and was a childhood friend of my oldest brother William. While Henry was visiting, he stopped by Williams' house where he shared information about the ideology of the BPP.

All of my brothers had expressed their outrage over discriminatory practices and were socially and politically astute; however, they were very leery of joining a group that had, by then, become the focus of the police's attention.

Several Black Panther members had already been killed in California and two police officers had been wounded, so it was a sure thing that the police would retaliate.

Mark had been patiently listening in and since Mark had already been involved with several non-violent protests by participating in marches

and demonstrations that had produced little results; the Black Panther Party was something that immediately drew his attention.

Mark listened attentively as Henry explained what the BPP was about and the ideology that they believed in.

As it were, my older brothers declined to join sensing that things would not end well for the Party. However, Mark decided that it was time to take a stand. Against my brother's advice, Mark decided to join.

Mark had become a rebel with a cause. Once he made up his mind, there was no changing it. Although Mark had been raised on Christian values, he was tired of begging for freedom and equality which he knew was his God given inalienable right.

So Mark packed a few of his belongings, and left with Henry headed for the Central Committee office located in Oakland, California. But first, Henry had to stop in Chicago, Illinois to pick up the reports from the Chicago Chapter.

While they were there, Mark was introduced to Fred Hampton and was asked to stay in Chicago and train with him so that Mark could set up his own local branch in Peoria. Mark agreed.

During Mark's official three month training in Chicago, which consisted of political education classes, leadership training, as well as the ideology and rhetoric of the Party, he became close friends with Fred Hampton.

Mark was inducted into the Black Panther Party by the Central Committee and accepted the title of Defense Captain, vowing to protect and defend the organization at all cost.

Defense Captain Mark Clark fully understood the risks involved when he joined the BPP. But he also knew that things had to change in order for minorities to be liberated from the social and political racist systems that blacks and minorities had to endure for so long.

When Mark returned home to Peoria, he had become completely immersed into the ideology and the rhetoric of the Black Panther Party. Mark ate, slept, and lived the BPP. One of the first things he did was to recruit members to help him organize and establish the Peoria Branch.

Since Mark had already influenced my life greatly, I knew firsthand the character that he had and the principals that he stood for. So when he asked me and my younger brother Joseph if we wanted to join, we didn't hesitate.

I remember that day so clearly because Mark said something to us that was so extremely profound, that I have never forgotten it:

"There are many who will talk about the injustice in this country; but only a few will do something about it. Which one are you?"

Looking back on everything now, I can't help but marvel at how young we all were. Mark was a few months from turning 22 years old; I would

soon be 19; and my brother Joseph would turn 18 a month following my birthday.

The Peoria Branch began to grow quickly with the first meeting being held at one of our prior homes at 436 W. Seventh Street. Mark recruited several of his long-time friends into the Party and gave them titles that corresponded to their perspective duties.

Within the very first meeting, we quickly learned that the Black Panther Party meant business. They had strict rules that had to be followed or you would suffer the consequence of being rudely expelled.

The very first thing we had to do was to memorize the Ten-Point Program and be able to quote it verbatim whenever asked. The BPP made sure you had a clear understanding of what the Party was fighting for and the rules of conduct that you were expected to follow.

The Peoria Branch meetings were conducted once a week where we went over current events and Mark shared what was going on in Chicago and any pertinent information from the Central Committee.

Each week, before the meeting closed, we would all read aloud; The Rules of the Party: The Points of Attention; and The Rules of Discipline. Every member of the Black Panther Party had to abide by those rules in order to remain a functional member of the party.

The 5 Main Rules of the Peoria Branch BPP:

1. No Party member can have narcotics or weed in his possession while doing Party work.
2. No Party member can be drunk while doing daily Party work.
3. Political Education Classes are mandatory for general membership.
4. No Party member will use, point, or fire a weapon of any kind unnecessarily or accidentally at anyone.
5. All Branches must submit weekly reports in writing to their respective Chapters.

The 8 Points of Attention:

1. Speak politely.
2. Pay fairly for what you buy.
3. Return everything you borrow.
4. Pay for anything you damage.
5. Do not hit or swear at people.
6. Do not damage property or crops of the poor, oppressed masses.
7. Do not take liberties with women.
8. If we ever have to take captives, do not ill-treat them.

The 8 Points of Attention were geared at learning cultural diversity and ways of teaching members how to respect everyone in the community regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion or gender.

The 3 Rules of Discipline

1. Obey orders in all your actions.
2. Do not take a single needle or piece of thread from the poor and oppressed masses.

3. Turn in everything captured from the attacking enemy.

In addition to learning the Ten-Point Program, we were required to take political education classes that Mark taught. It was the first time I had ever been introduced to other forms of governmental systems other than our own.

Growing up during the 60s, we were all taught from a very early age that Capitalism equated to democracy, while Communism and Socialism were somehow evil. We didn't really know why that was, but we never thought to question it.

After studying the pros and cons of each governmental system, Mark pointed out that Capitalism is not the same as democracy. He taught us that you can never have true democracy as long as you have a system structured on white supremacy-racism that promotes in-equality.

Mark taught us that no governmental system has clean hands. They have all had leaders who were corrupt including ours: They have all operated to conquer smaller countries to steal their resources; and they have all had their share of atrocities causing the deaths of millions of innocent people.

The BPP chose to study the philosophy of Maoism, which basically emphasized that the oppressed masses should come together in a revolutionary strategy to oppose the oppressive policies of the dominant ruling class.

We were given the Little Red Book by Chairman Mao Zedong, (sometimes called Mao

Tse Tung) in which we had to read and study the quotations to understand the tactics needed for a revolution should there be one.

Now, as odd as this may sound, the Black Panther Party's goal was not to overthrow the government. What we were fighting against was a racist system built on white supremacy laws that had created injustice and discrimination.

Keep in mind that blacks were not even allowed to vote until after 1965. And even then, many blacks in the southern states were still blocked from voting due to their racially biased state and local laws.

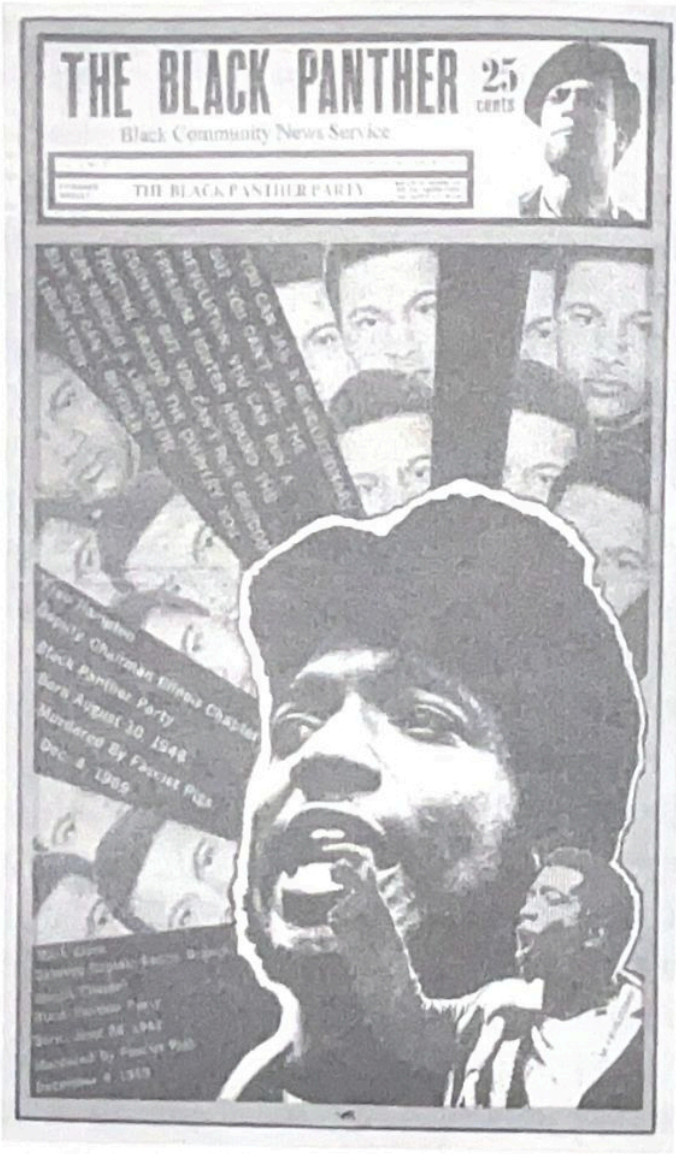
The goal of the BPP was to change the racist laws that had been written into legislature so that we could enjoy the fruits of our labor just like everyone else.

My brother Joseph and I were given the title of Foot Soldiers, which meant that we were part of the rank and file that was expected to get out and sell BPP Newspapers daily. We were each given a bundle of 100 newspapers, which was our quota for the week.

Everyday Joseph and I would stand on the corner across from each other and flag people down to sell the papers. To my pleasant surprise, the newspapers sold quickly and we were always able to meet our quota.

The BPP newspapers cost just 25 cents and had nicely illustrated pictures inside drawn by Mr. Emory Douglas; along with articles that expressed the current events going on throughout the country.

(1970 issue of Fred Hampton and Mark Clark)



9 Peoria's First Free Breakfast Program

By July 1969, the Peoria Branch of the BPP had recruited about 50 members along with approximately 20 non-members who chose not to join, but were willing to help with minor duties and transportation.

After organizing the Peoria Branch, Mark proceeded to set up the first Free Breakfast Program in Peoria, Illinois. He followed the blueprint the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California, had laid out for all Branches and Chapters across the country.

Mark went around from church to church looking for a suitable location that had a facility big enough where he could feed children before they went to school. It was difficult finding one because the police had gotten so ruthless, that no one wanted to get involved.

Finally, after searching all over Peoria without any success, Reverend Blaine Ramsey Jr. whom Mark had worked closely with during his time with the NAACP decided to open up the doors at

Ward Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

All of the BPP members of the Peoria Branch came together and prepared and served the food. Many of the children had never had breakfast before, so they were really excited and appreciative after receiving the meals. After the children left for school, we cleaned the facility and then distributed any left over meals to the elderly and to those in need within the community.

In an article in the Community Word, an independently owned newspaper in Peoria, journalist Clare Howard reported on how Mr. Cleo Carter, a minister at Ward Chapel AME Church, continued the breakfast program that Mark Clark had began years ago. She writes,

"Seven years ago he (Carter) took over the breakfast ministry that had its origins in the volunteer work of Mark Clark, a 22-year-old member of the Black Panther Party who took to heart the two missions of the Black Panthers: free breakfast programs and community health clinics. Ward Chapel AME continues with that tradition to this day."

Also in the article, Mr. Cleo Carter stated,

"He (Mark) went to almost every church in this community asking to start a free breakfast program, and he was refused everywhere except here. Pastor Blaine Ramsey said yes. Mark served food to children five days a week for months until church members voted to discontinue his involvement because of the FBI."

Every week, Mark and his comrades would go around to various stores and purchase the food using a small part of the proceeds from selling the newspapers. When Mark ran out of money, he would solicit food donations from the stores to help feed the children.

Mark used a particular tactic that proved to be successful. If the stores refused to donate food, the next day the Peoria Branch would all show up and boycott the store. When people saw the Peoria BPP there, nobody would enter until Mark gave the go ahead.

Mark was bold, I must admit. But he truly loved the people in Peoria. He was a man on a

mission and he was not going to quit until he accomplished his goal. Mark was a true servant of the people and he deeply loved the Peoria community.

The BPP was unconventional for sure, but their main purpose was to serve the community, rather than to exploit it. And although some people did have a certain fear of the BPP, they also admired what they were doing.

The Peoria BPP Free Breakfast Program was one of many social programs that the Peoria BPP initiated under Mark's leadership. Mark also launched several free clothing and shoes give-a-ways for children. Once a week children would come to pick out any shoes or clothing that they needed. Mark was working on setting up a Free Medical Center and a Sickle Cell Foundation in Peoria before he was killed.

10 From Peoria to Chicago

One of my most memorable experiences while in the Black Panther Party was when Mark took the Peoria Branch to Chicago for one of the regional Black Panther Meetings. There were about thirty of us that went; approximately twenty men and ten women.

Mark organized getting the transportation from members as well as non-members because back then, we were all young and most of us didn't even own a car. As soon as Mark had coordinated everything and had gotten enough drivers together, we left that following morning.

We all crammed together in about 5 or 6 cars, all headed for Chicago. Our destination was Maywood, Illinois, the home of Fred Hampton which was a suburb about 12 miles from Chicago.

I found it interesting to learn that Maywood, Illinois, was formerly used as an Underground Railroad to aid African American slaves in escaping to freedom.

Our first stop was Irving Middle School, which was located across the street from Chairman Fred Hampton's home. The school was closed for the summer, so it made a perfect location for us to meet up. When we got there, it blew us away!

There were about 300-400 Black Panther members there that came from the surrounding areas. It was such a beautiful sight to see: Hundreds of black men and black women sporting their neatly coiffed afros, all dressed in black with fists raised high in the air and chanting, "All Power to the People!"

I remember feeling so proud that day, just to be a part of it. After greeting other members with the black power fist, we were then instructed to line up in rows so we could march military style. I noticed that some Panther members had shotguns by their sides for our protection.

It was as if we were in an actual military training camp. We all chanted as we marched in stride from left to right, and then we went into singing the Panther's liberation song. All the women would sing the first verse and the men would shout the second verse, "Off the Pigs!"

No more Pigs in our community
Off the Pigs
No more Pigs in our community
Off the Pigs
No more Pigs in our community
Off the Pigs
No more Pigs in our community

As I look back on that now, I don't think suggesting to, "Off the Pigs," was very wise. However, our militant actions were a direct response to the oppression and abuse that many black men and women had suffered at the hands of the police for years.

One of our former Peoria members' explained it this way, "We got tired of being harassed and picked up by racist police and then threaten to be taken down to the river and killed. We had to do something. We had had enough."

After about an hour or so, we left the school and walked down the street to Fred Hampton's home. Once there, we were offered beverages by the Chicago Chapter. I remember it being so crowded that many of us had to stand outside on the lawn and on the sidewalk resting up against cars.

When Chairman Fred Hampton got up to speak, his words were powerful and almost poetic. He effectively articulated the political and social effects that gang violence was creating for minorities in the community.

After Fred spoke, he called Mark to come up and speak and I could see that they had become very close friends. Mark stepped on the top of the stairs so everyone could see and hear him.

The Peoria Branch and several other members clapped and cheered him on! He was our leader and we were more than proud and so honored to be represented by him.

Mark talked about how the tactics of the enemy is always to divide and conquer. He

stressed that we will never stop the enemy as long as we are fighting among ourselves. He went on to say that the only way that change can happen is if we unite together in unity.

It was a meeting that was so electrifying that you could feel the energy in the air. All that day, we stood as proud black men and women radiating on high vibration!

Mark continued to travel back and forth from Peoria to Chicago on many occasions where he stood along side Chairman Fred Hampton at numerous rallies and events. By then, they had become close friends and comrades in the fight for liberation of all people.

11 The Last Car Ride

It was just before Thanksgiving 1969, when I called my mother in Flint, Michigan and asked if I could come to Flint to relocate with her. I was 19 years old, separated from my now ex-husband, and had a one-year-old son.

Without hesitation, my mom said yes. She and my older brother William drove down from Flint to Peoria to pick us up. The following day, just as we were about to leave, Mark came out and asked to be dropped off in Chicago. Mark must have been prepared to leave because he already had his bags packed.

We were all nervous that day. Things had gotten so bad in Chicago that we feared for Mark's life. About a week prior, a former Chicago Black Panther member named Spurgeon (Jake) Winters had been killed in a shootout with the Chicago police where two police officers had also been killed.

My oldest brother William was driving while my mother sat on the front passenger side. Mark, my one-year-old son Michael and I sat in the

back. We didn't talk much at first during that trip because we already felt a sense of doom. Then Mark opened up the conversation and began speaking to me about the Black Panther Party.

He instructed me to get involved with a Chapter in Flint when I arrived there and to continue selling the BPP newspapers. After that, the entire car ride turned grim.

Mark said that there was a lot of dissention in the Chicago Chapter and that Fred Hampton didn't know who he could trust. Mark went on to say that Fred suspected that the Party had been infiltrated with FBI informants because information was constantly being leaked out. The problem was, he didn't know who they were.

Hearing that, both William and I tried our best to persuade Mark to come to Flint instead of staying in Chicago. I remember William saying,

"Man, you need to get out of that. Give that up and come on to Flint with us."

I also tried to persuade Mark to come to Flint. I told him that he could get involved with the Panthers in Flint and continue the work that he had started in Peoria. But Mark flat out refused.

To Mark, leaving the Party now would mean betraying his comrade and friend Fred Hampton, and that was something he was not willing to do.

Mark was the Defense Captain of the BPP, and he had made a vow to defend the Party at all cost. One thing about Mark, he was always loyal to his friends and dedicated to a fault. Mark was

well aware that his life was in danger, but he had reached the point of no return.

When we got to Chicago, Mark instructed William to drop him off on a particular corner. He got out of the car and grabbed his bags from the trunk and laid them on the curb. He gave us all a hug and a kiss. Then he said these devastating words,

"I probably won't see ya'll again, but just know that I love all of you."

My mother immediately let out a scream and cried out to Jesus! William and I tried one last time to get Mark to come with us to Flint; but Mark had dedicated himself to the Black Panther Party and he was committed to seeing it through to the end.

After about 10 minutes of going back and forth trying to persuade Mark not to stay in Chicago; Mark just picked up his bags that were resting on the side of the curb and slowly walked away. We waited there for a while, hoping that he would change his mind, but he kept walking and never looked back.

As we drove away, my mother began praying and calling on the name of Jesus. William and I joined her in prayer, asking God to protect Mark and watch over him. We prayed all the way to Gary, Indiana. After the prayer was over, we were all solemn and no one said a word…
A week later, Mark was dead!

12 In Cold Blood

On December 4, 1969, in the early morning hours around 4:45 am, the Chicago police stormed into Fred Hampton's apartment with a search warrant on the pretense that the Black Panther Party had a stash of illegal weapons there.

No illegal guns were ever produced and in the aftermath, both Black Panther leaders; Defense Captain Mark Clark and Chairman Fred Hampton were left dead. Along with their murders, four other members of the BPP were shot multiple times.

The police claimed that the Panthers began shooting at them as soon as they entered the apartment, which caused them to return fire. They described it as a vicious attack from the Panthers as they faced a barrage of bullets. They claimed the Panthers repeatedly would not cease fire after being asked to do so several times.

However, forensic evidence would later prove that the police version of events were totally false.

The Panthers insisted that the police came in shooting, first killing Defense Captain Mark Clark, and then entering the back bedroom to kill Chairman Fred Hampton while he was in bed, unable to be wakened, and had been drugged.

The police then went back into the front bedroom and shot four other Panther members. According to trial transcripts, the only members who were not shot were: Harold Bell, Louis Truelock, and Deborah Johnson, now known as Akua Njeri who was nine months pregnant.

After the raid was over, all seven Panther survivors were charged with attempted murder.

Immediately following the bloodbath, State's attorney, Edward Hanrahan, told the Chicago Tribune Newspaper that he and his officers had no idea that Hampton or Clark were in the apartment.

The police also staged a filmed reenactment of the raid and broadcasted it on WBBM-TV in which officers acted out their claims by "crouching" as if ducking and dodging bullets.

In addition, Hanrahan's office released to the Chicago Tribune photographs of a door that they claimed would show "conclusive proof" that the Panthers opened the battle by firing a shotgun thru the apartment door.

The following day, the Chicago Sun-Times published its own news scoop, which supported the Panther's version of events. The Sun-Times

noticed that the photos released by Hanrahan's office were not bullet holes; but were old **nail heads** in the door, which disproved the conclusive claim by Hanrahan's office.

In addition, Daily News columnist Mike Royko wrote that he had inspected the apartment "more than once" and concluded that Hanrahan's claim that police encountered gunfire from the Panthers "doesn't mesh with the condition of the place," according to the Daily News report.

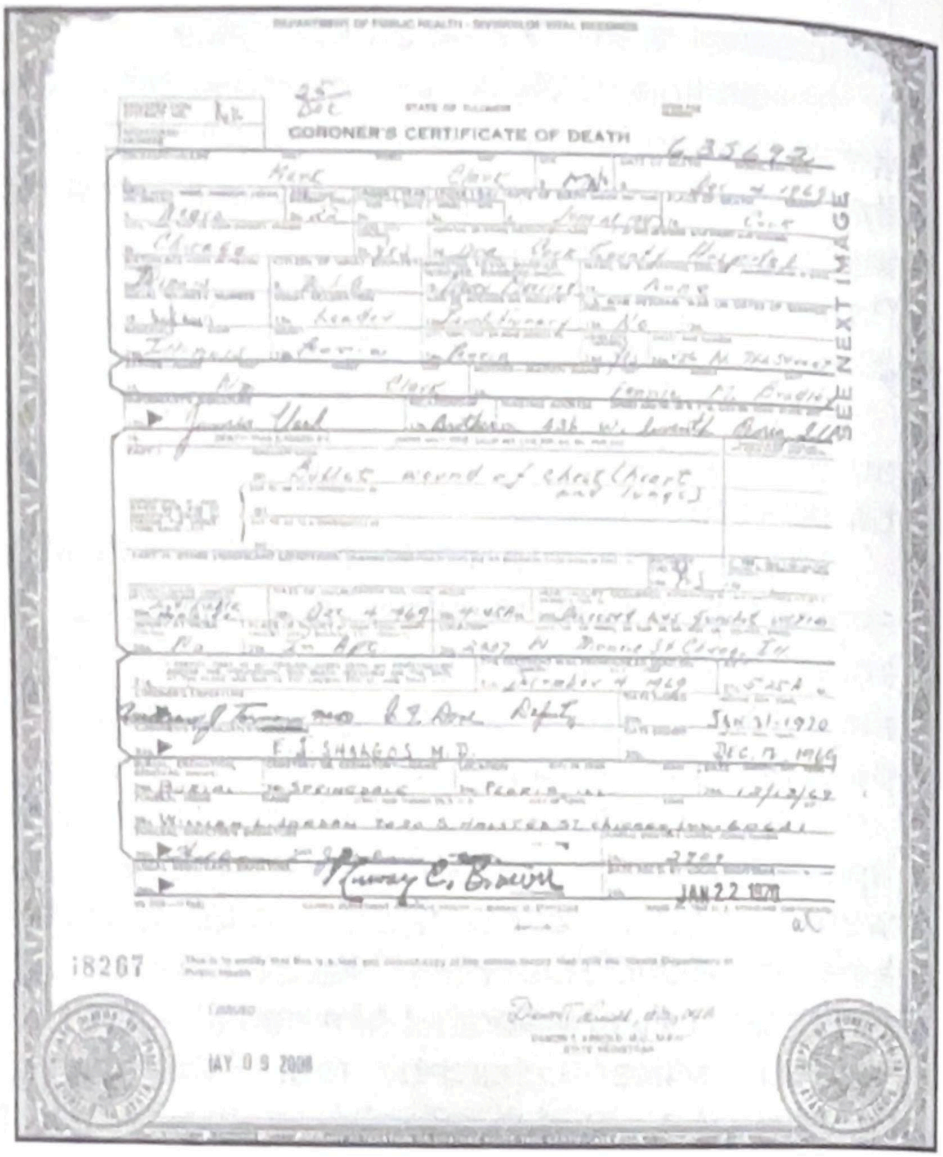
As the investigation got underway, the autopsy reports on Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were released.

The autopsy report done on Fred Hampton showed that Fred Hampton had been shot four times; twice of which were at point blank range in the forehead while he was lying in bed and had possibly been drugged.

The autopsy report on Mark Clark showed that he was shot one time by a shotgun blast that went through his chest, heart, and lungs and was killed instantly. This was in stark contrast to what the police officer who shot him had alleged.

The officer claimed that Mark began "pumping" a shotgun after being shot, while the officer struggled with him to gain control of his shotgun. Mark's autopsy proved that the police officer's version of the event was impossible because Mark would not have been able to put up any struggle after receiving a shotgun blast that tore through his chest, heart, and lungs.

(Mark Clark's Death Certificate)



The autopsy reports angered the black community and caused a sustained outcry from community leaders and local civil rights organizations who demanded an investigation of police actions by an independent commission to look into whether the police violated the Black Panthers civil rights.

In response to the community's concerns, the City of Chicago held a Coroner's Blue- Ribbon Panel Inquest on January 6, 1970. Without the benefit of the ballistics findings, not surprisingly, the inquest ruled the deaths as, "justifiable homicide."

Then, in May 1970, the ballistics findings were released by the federal grand jury and it concluded that virtually all the empty shells and bullets recovered at the scene (92-99) came from police weapons.

Only 1 shot had come from the Panther's side; a bullet that was lodged in the ceiling of the living room which suggested that it was a reflexive shot from Mark Clark's gun that went off involuntarily after he had been shot in the heart and took his last breath.

Journalist Lawrence J Maushard wrote in an article titled Mark Clark's body in morgue unclaimed, that "The one-sided carnage was so obvious that an observer described the scene as "nothing but a Northern lynching." In addition, the article stated that, "the internationally renowned scholar named Noam Chomsky called the killing, "the gravest domestic crime of the Nixon administration."

Following the murders of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton, there were countless people, both black and white, who were outraged. An article written by Jonah Raskin in an online site called The Rag Blog, poignantly sums up their emotions. Here is a small excerpt from that article:

"...When police officers murder men in their sleep one can't simply go on living as though nothing has happened. Indeed, something very terrible happened in America when Fred Hampton and Mark Clark were assassinated. I have not forgotten them, and I have not forgotten what happened to me on December 9, 1969. The stain is still there on the national conscience. That is how I feel now, 40 years later."

13 The Thirteen Year Lawsuit

The survivors of the raid were so appalled at the ruling of "justifiable homicide" that they all decided to file a $47 million civil suit which would later produce evidence that the Federal Bureau of Investigation, (FBI) had an informant who provided a diagram of the apartment to the Chicago police.

In addition to that, during the thirteen year long trials and appeals; numerous documents were subpoenaed which revealed that the FBI's Counter Intelligence Program now known as COINTELPRO had targeted the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther Party.

As I began to pour over the testimony from the transcripts of the court proceedings relating to the death of my brother Mark and his comrade, Fred Hampton: I found startling information that most people are simply not aware of.

Although I am not an attorney, and make no claim of such; I will do my best to present an accurate summary of the numerous court

transcripts from the thirteen years of trials and appeals. This information can be easily verified and obtained in its entirety online.

In June 1970, civil rights attorneys from the People's Law Office filed a massive civil rights law suit seeking damages on behalf of their plaintiffs; the Hampton and Clark families along with the seven surviving Panthers.

During the thirteen years, the first trial lasted for 18 months, and ended with a hung jury. The presiding judge, Sam Perry, threw out the whole case and assessed in costs $100,000 against the Panther survivors.

Because Judge Perry had made errors in handling the case, and should have ordered a retrial rather than throwing the entire case out; the plaintiffs were able to appeal to the Seventh Circuit.

In April 1979, during the Seventh Circuit proceedings, in a separate case regarding a rogue police officer; it was revealed that William O'Neal, who was Fred Hampton's bodyguard, was actually an FBI informant. This was damaging information for the police defendants!

The Seventh Circuit reversed Judge Perry's decision and found there to be substantial evidence of a conspiracy between the FBI, State's Attorney Edward Hanrahan, and the 14 police raiders for obstructing justice and suppressing nearly 200 volumes of documents.

This led to another trial in the District Court where FBI documents were subpoenaed and revealed that FBI informant William O'Neal had

given a floor plan to the FBI which was then supplied to Hanrahan's police raiders.

In addition, the documents also revealed that O'Neal was paid a $300 bonus by the FBI for making the raid a "success."

Below is a breakdown of all the defendants and what their titles were.

The State Defendants were:

Edward Hanrahan, Cook County State's Attorney's Office; Richard Jalovec, Assistant State's Attorney and supervisor of the Special Prosecutions Unit; James Meltreger, Assistant State's Attorney; and Sheldon Sorosky, Assistant State's Attorney.

The Chicago Police Defendants were:

Officers Groth, Davis, Carmody, Jones, Ciszeweki, Howard, Marusich, Kelly, and Joseph — who were all assigned to the Special Prosecutors Unit (SPU). Officer Groth was next in command after Jalovec, to whom all the officers reported.

The Federal defendants were:

Marlin Johnson, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); Robert Piper, Supervisor of the Racial Matters Squad of the FBI, Chicago office; Roy Mitchell, Special Agent of the FBI, Chicago office, assigned to the Racial Matters Squad; and William O'Neal, a paid informant for the FBI.

During the trials, FBI documents showed that William O'Neal had given a floor plan that included the layout of the rooms, the placement of doors and furniture, the identity of the apartment's occupants and the location of the bedrooms.

Testimony was given by defendant Marlin Johnson, Special Agent in charge of the Chicago office of the FBI; who confirmed from an FBI document that the FBI had a memo that stated that on November 21, 1969, the Chicago police and the State's Attorney's office had been told that there were numerous weapons inside the Panther apartment but the guns "were apparently legally purchased."

According to trial transcripts, on November 24, 1969, O'Neal told FBI agent Mitchell that the weapons had been removed from the Monroe Street apartment. Mitchell then relayed that information to FBI agent Piper who informed Special Agent Johnson, and the raid was cancelled.

Within two days of that cancellation, officer Mitchell called officer Jalovec and told him that the weapons had been returned to the apartment; this time he added that a variety of illegally purchased weapons were being kept there which included a sawed-off shotgun and a stolen police gun.

Officer Groth testified that he had received a phone call on December 2, 1969 from an unpaid informant who provided similar information to that of Mitchell. However, Groth refused to name

the person, but stated that the informant was another member of the BPP.

On December 3, 1969, Jalovec and Groth met with Hanrahan and recounted the information to him. Then Jalovec and Groth drafted a search warrant, under the pretense of illegal weapons. The planned raid was back on for December 3, 1969, but it was later changed to 4am of December 4, 1969, claiming that they wanted to make sure that everyone would be home.

(No illegal guns were ever recovered from the apartment)

After thirteen long years of court battles, state attorney Hanrahan and the police officers involved in the raid who had been indicted by a grand jury for obstructing justice and conspiracy to present false evidence were acquitted of all charges as part of the settlement agreement.

Although the FBI was not directly the party responsible for leading the raid, a federal grand jury agreed that the bureau did play a significant role in the events leading up to the raid.

After two civil trials, two Seventh Circuit Court of Appeal decisions, and finally a Supreme Court ruling; a semblance of justice was finally found.

In 1983, the Federal Government's Justice Department, the City of Chicago, and Cook County settled the lawsuit filed by survivors and the families of Clark and Hampton for $1.82 million. The three agencies involved would each pay a third of the cost ($616,333). A Settlement

of $1.8 million was awarded to the Family of Clark and Hampton and the Panther Survivors.

14 COINTELPRO

At the time of Defense Captain Mark Clark and Chairman Fred Hampton's death, no one had any idea or knowledge of COINTELPRO. It was a secret operation that had not yet been uncovered. It wasn't until the middle of the thirteen year long trial that this information would eventually get exposed.

Meanwhile, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover had already developed a particular dislike for the Black Panther Party. On September 8, 1968, he told The New York Times that the Black Panthers were "the greatest threat to the internal security of the country."

In late 1970, William Davidon, an anti-war activist and physics professor at Haverford College in Pennsylvania, recruited seven additional anti-war activists, and created a secret Citizens Committee to investigate the FBI.

On March 8, 1971, during the Ali-Frazier Boxing fight, the anti-war group broke into the unprotected offices of the FBI in Media, Pennsylvania and made off with all the files, on

the assumption that they would find evidence of the FBI's systematic spying on Americans.

In the weeks following the burglary, the FBI files taken showed that the FBI displayed one image to the public, but secretly utilized a hidden FBI program. That program used deception, disinformation, and violence as tools to harass, damage, and silence people whose political opinions were opposed to that of FBI director, J Edgar Hoover.

It soon became crystal clear that the FBI had been and was engaged in covert and illegal activities. FBI agents and informers were ordered to spy on the private lives, including sexual activities, of the nation's highest officials as well as hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Under orders from FBI director J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI had secretly initiated a national covert counterintelligence program called "COINTELPRO" against the American people.

The COINTELPRO operation was designed to neutralize a variety of political organizations including the civil rights movement and those in which the Bureau characterized as "Black Nationalist Hate Groups."

FBI agents were instructed to expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit and to otherwise neutralize the activities of certain black organizations and their leaders.

The recommended procedures were all implemented against the Chicago, Illinois Panther organization. While the Black Panther

Party was not an original target of the program, it was included by September 1968.

The recommended methods of the COINTELPRO operation were infiltration—(planting a spy or an agent provocateur in the organization); psychological warfare—(producing false media stories, bogus letters, and phony leaflets); harassment through the legal system—(arrests and convictions); and extralegal force or violence through—(break-ins, beatings, frame-ups).

During the trials, according to transcripts, the plaintiff lawyers effectively presented considerable evidence to show that the national COINTELPRO program adopted a variety of tactics against the Chicago BPP, which seemingly were not aimed at preventing violence, but at neutralizing the BPP as a political entity.

These tactics included efforts to discredit the BPP among "liberal" whites: The promotion of violent conflicts between the BPP and other groups: The encouragement of dissension within the BPP; and the disruption of the BPP's Breakfast Program for Children.

One of the key figures in the Chicago FBI's program to disrupt the Panthers was William O'Neal. As a paid FBI informant whom FBI Agent Mitchell originally had contacted while O'Neal was incarcerated in the Cook County Jail; he provided detailed information to the FBI regarding the Chicago Chapter of the BPP.

Under orders from FBI agent Roy Mitchell, O'Neal was instructed to join the BPP the first day the office opened. O'Neal walked into the BPP office at 2350 West Madison Street in November 1968 and joined, soon becoming the chief of security for the Panthers.

In June 1969 the FBI, based on information provided by O'Neal, executed a fugitive arrest warrant at Panther headquarters. No shots were fired at that time; however, several Panthers were arrested for harboring a fugitive and weapons were seized. All the charges against the Panthers were ultimately later dropped.

Tension and hostilities between the BPP and the local law enforcement agencies in Chicago escalated throughout the summer and fall of 1969. On July 21 and October 3, 1969, the Chicago police ransacked the BPP headquarters.

Then, on November 13, 1969, things really heated up. Spurgeon Jake Winters, a former BPP member was killed in a shootout with the Chicago police. Also in that shoot-out, two police officers were killed and seven officers were wounded.

A few days after the shoot-out, on November 19, FBI agent Mitchell met with O'Neal and with O'Neal's invaluable help; they constructed a floor plan of the apartment at 2337 West Monroe Street in which Hampton had recently moved into with his girl friend Deborah Johnson, now known as Akua Njeri.

After the meeting with O'Neal, Mitchell met with State's Attorney Hanrahan and members of the Chicago Police Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU) and conveyed to them the information contained in the floor plan. From there, Chicago police officers obtained a search warrant for a raid under the pretense of illegal weapons. The rest is history.

15 Exposing the Truth

The FBI documents that were subpoenaed during the trials helped to expose the FBI for their misconduct. After the "Watergate" scandal of 1973 occurred, a U.S. Senate Committee, chaired by Senator Frank Church, was established to investigate the FBI and the CIA.

In 1975, the Senate Committee determined that the FBI's secret COINTELPRO program was in fact bent on destroying the BPP and its leadership.

Years after the murders of Defense Captain Mark Clark and Chairman Fred Hampton, we are finally beginning to realize just how deep the rabbit hole went: Wire tapping; smear campaigns; FBI informants; and sadly, even assassinations. Yet, there are still many unanswered questions surrounding the deaths of Black Panther leaders Mark Clark and Fred Hampton.

Since we now know without a doubt that the FBI did have informants in the BPP and did play

a role in the deaths of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton; we have a clearer picture of exactly what happened the morning of the raid.

On the morning of December 4, 1969, just as soon as the Chicago police entered the door, the first thing they did was to shoot and kill Mark Clark, who was on security watch. That was not a mere coincidence: That was a deliberate hit.

The police knew exactly where Mark would be sitting from the information provided to them, and the diagrams that were drawn up by William O'Neal. They knew that they had to first take out Mark in order to get to Fred. Without a doubt, the two BPP leaders killed in the raid were not by happenstance; but were the victims of a well thought out plan.

If the Panthers had been out doing some nefarious activity at 4:45 in the morning and there was a shootout with the police, I would not be writing this book. Instead, the Panther members were in bed, most of them asleep and unaware that the police were planning to raid the apartment with deadly intentions.

One of the things that I learned from my brother Mark was to become a critical thinker by thinking outside the box and to ask the hard questions that no one else wants to ask.

A question that I have often wondered is why William O'Neal would agree to do a public interview where he so cavalierly admitted to being an FBI informant for the whole world to see.

Its one thing to be exposed at trial as a paid FBI informant; but it's another thing to go to the media and expose yourself to literally millions of people. Why would he do that? Why would anyone do that?

Could it possibly be that once he got exposed, he became the scapegoat to act as a cover up so that other FBI informants would go unnoticed? If so, then who were the other informants?

After studying the tactics of the FBI from targeting Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, is it reasonable to think that the FBI would put all of their faith in just one informant to bring down the BPP? The answer should be obvious.

Mark's role as Defense Captain meant that he would defend the BPP at all costs. So Mark didn't just happen to be in Chicago on Dec, 4th. Mark specifically went to Chicago knowing that the Chicago Chapter had been infiltrated, and it was his duty to defend the Party with his life.

But my real burning question is this: If Mark could come all the way from Peoria to defend the Chicago Chapter; where were the other leaders and members from Chicago who should have been on high alert and ready to protect Fred Hampton and the Party?

Using the logical assumption that William O'Neal was not the only FBI informant in the Chicago Chapter, then this begs the question of who actually drugged Fred Hampton? Interestingly enough, I am not the only one who has asked this question.

In an article titled, "Fred Hampton remembered as 'focused, caring' visionary," journalist Kathy Chaney of the Chicago Sun Times interviewed former Panther and friend of Fred Hampton named Billy "Che" Brooks.

Mr. Brooks was the deputy minister of education for the BPP of Illinois. He stated in that interview that, "the police had raided their offices several times that year, and constantly harassed them... After Jake Winters' death, the Panthers could sense something was imminent," Brooks said.

Brooks also stated that he was locked up at the time of the murders. However, he did not believe that O'Neal spiked the Kool-aid. In the article, he stated, "O'Neal did not come into that house. I know that for a fact. So, who did it? Nobody wants to talk about it. That's the real question. Who put the Seconal in Chairman Fred's Kool-aid?" The article went on to say, "That question has dogged him most of his life."

Although we may never know the identities of the other informants, what we do know is that after the police raid was over, hundreds of Black Panther members lost faith in the leadership and quickly left the Chicago Chapter.

Fifty years later after the death of these two devoted Black Panther leaders—Defense Captain Mark Clark and Chairman Fred Hampton; we are still left with unanswered questions.

The sad fact of the matter is that many leaders who have attempted to change corrupt

systems are often assassinated so that the status quo continues to flourish: People such as Dr Martin Luther King Jr.; Malcolm X; Senator Robert Kennedy; and now, Fred Hampton and Mark Clark.

What I have come to recognize is that assassinations are not meant to be solved. They were deliberately done in a way to conceal the truth by falsifying vital information. The sad reality is that many organizations that attempt to improve the lives of minorities are commonly infiltrated from within.

16 Honoring Mark Clark

At the age of 22 years old, Defense Captain Mark Clark became a martyr for civil rights. He gave his life fighting for equality and the principles that he believed. Mark never got the chance to marry nor have any children. Instead, he devoted his brief time on earth to fighting for civil rights and helping others in his community.

On a chilly Saturday afternoon, December 13, 1969, a funeral service for Defense Captain Mark Clark was held at the Freedom Hall in Peoria, Illinois. The church was packed to the brim with nearly a thousand mourners viewing his body. Mark was dressed in his official black leather jacket and black beret indicative of his leadership and dedication to the Party.

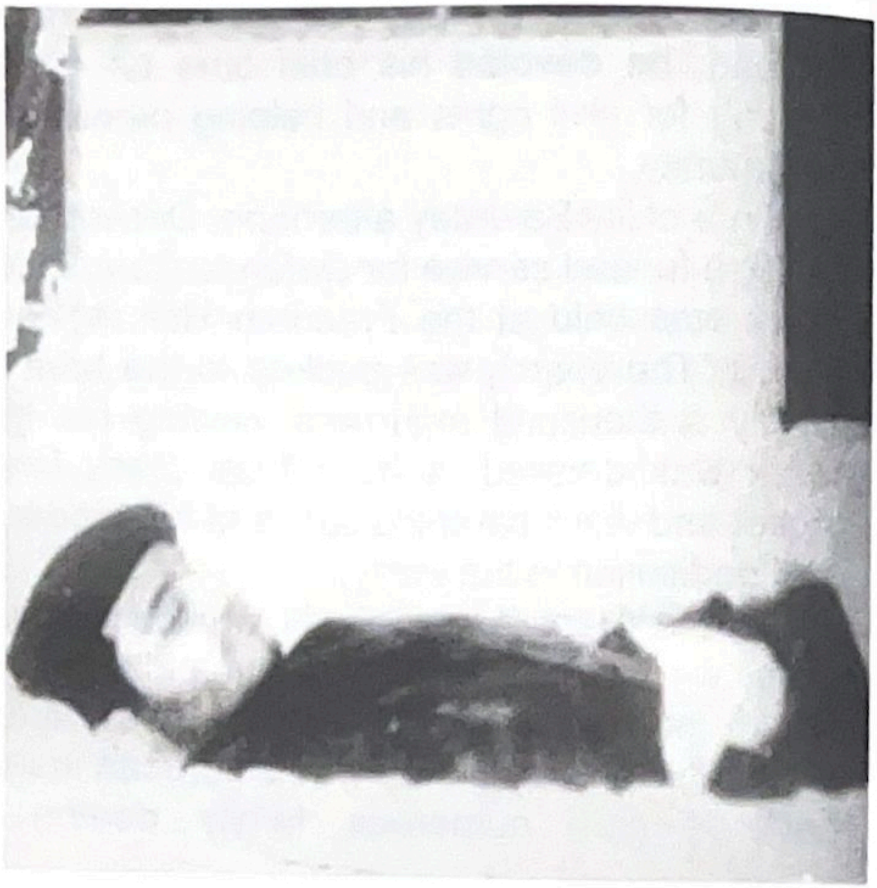
As the Clark family slowly walked down the aisle, we were instructed by our older brothers not to let them see you cry. That was virtually impossible for me to do. I was all broken inside—battered from numerous family deaths—still

trying my best to conceal my pain with a false face.

Members of the Peoria Black Panther Party filed in, also wearing their black leather jackets and black berets. They had taken up donations and had assisted the Clark family with the cost of Mark Clark's funeral and burial expenses.

The Peoria Branch of the BPP stood lined up against the walls in silent formation as a sign of respect, paying tribute and giving honor to their slain leader. It was a day filled with anguish and sorrow; a day of unspeakable grief!
(Image provided by Rose Clark Morris)

Body of Defense Captain Mark Clark



Reverend Blaine Ramsey Jr., who had been Mark's mentor ever since he had joined the NAACP, gave the eulogy. Ms. Juliette Whittaker who was also a mentor of Mark's from Carver Community Center was a special guest speaker.

In 2006, my brother Matthew wrote an article in remembrance of Mark. In the article, Matthew reflected on Mark's funeral. This is just a small portion of that moving article by Matthew Clark titled, "Letter to a Panther,"

"Word was passed along the line: No tears. Don't let them see you cry! Then our mother led us into the church. One by one your fifteen remaining brothers and sisters, in order of our birth, slowly filed into the church. Each jaw was firmly set, every eye was dry, and on each face the firm resolution was apparent, "Don't let them see you cry!"

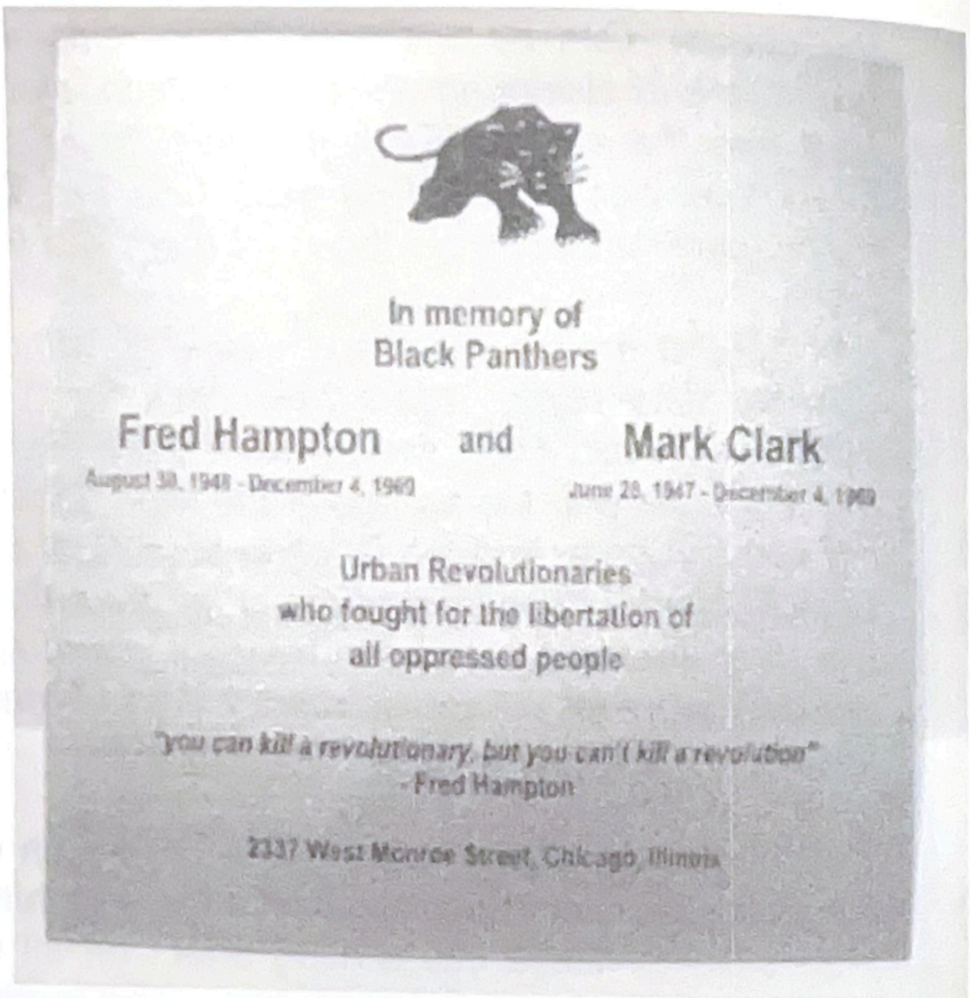
I sit here at my computer and suddenly, without warning they come: Tears held back for over thirty-five years. They rise up from deep inside me to mingle with the sounds of the wind against my window pane and the jangling sounds of the vertical blinds. I don't hold back. I let them flow. For they are not tears for an injustice done, nor are they tears for a Panther slain. They are tears for you Mark, the little brother that I miss."

When Mark Clark died, the Peoria Branch of the Black Panther Party basically died with him. Mark's death had a devastating effect on all of those who knew and loved him. The entire

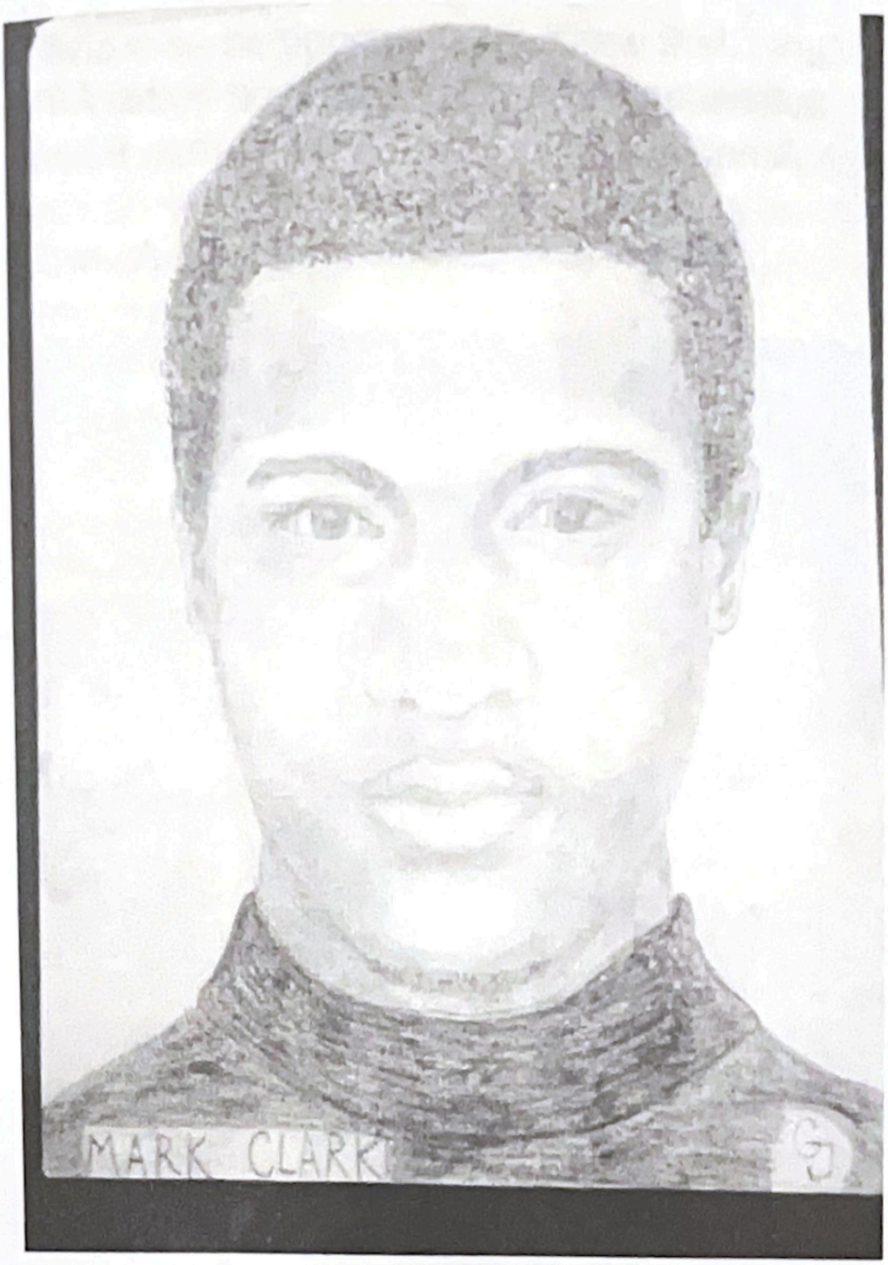
Peoria community was outraged and saddened over his murder.

Shortly after Mark's burial, for a short while, my nephew Daryl along with some of my older siblings and cousins began their own unofficial Black Panther Party in Peoria. They would visit nearby college campuses and speak out about the horrendous murders of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton.

In honor of Mark, the Clark family was presented with a gold plaque from It's About Time BPP.

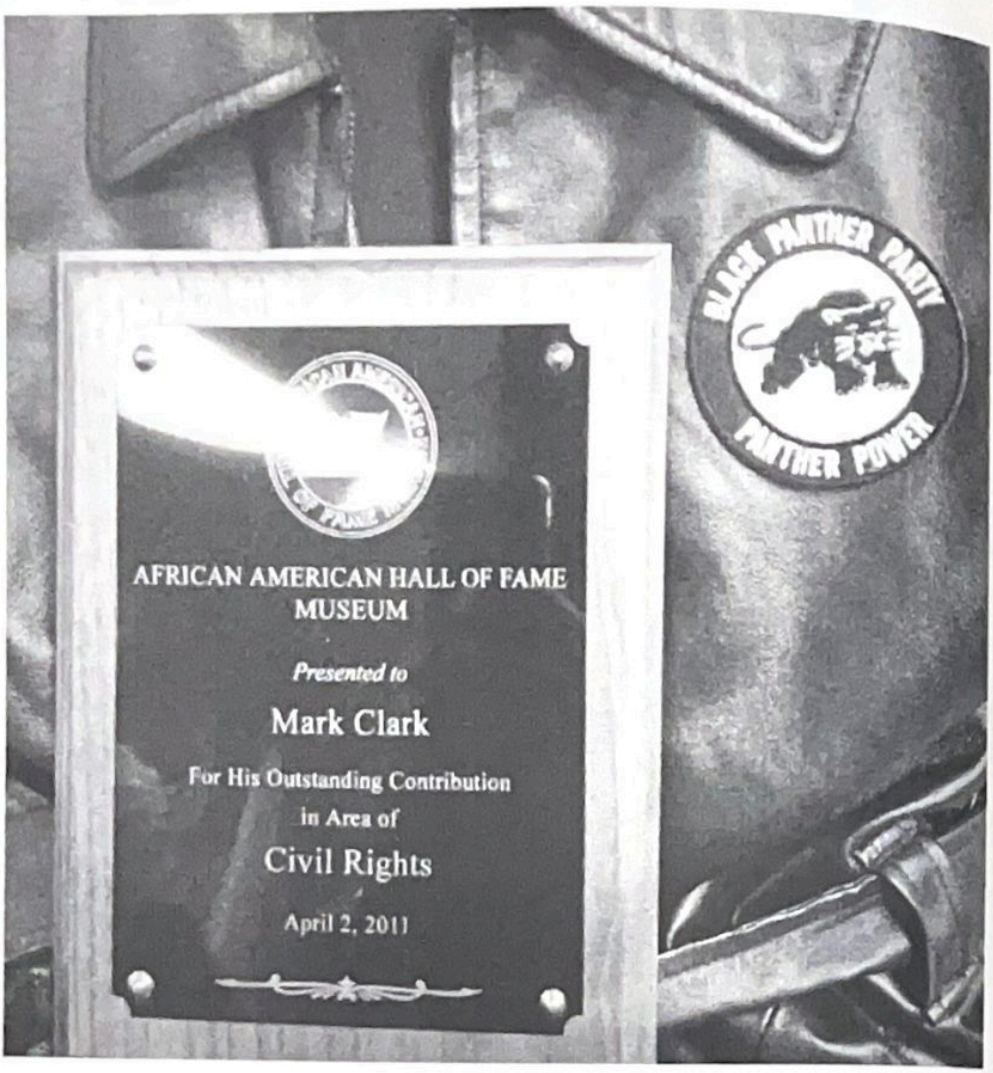

In memory of
Black Panthers
Fred Hampton
and
Mark Clark
August 30, 1948 - December 4, 1969
June 20, 1947 - December 4, 1969
Urban Revolutionaries
who fought for the libertation of
all oppressed people
"you can kill a revolutionary, but you can't kill a revolution"
- Fred Hampton
2337 West Monroe Street, Chicago, Illinois

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!



(Drawing by Gloria Clark Jackson)

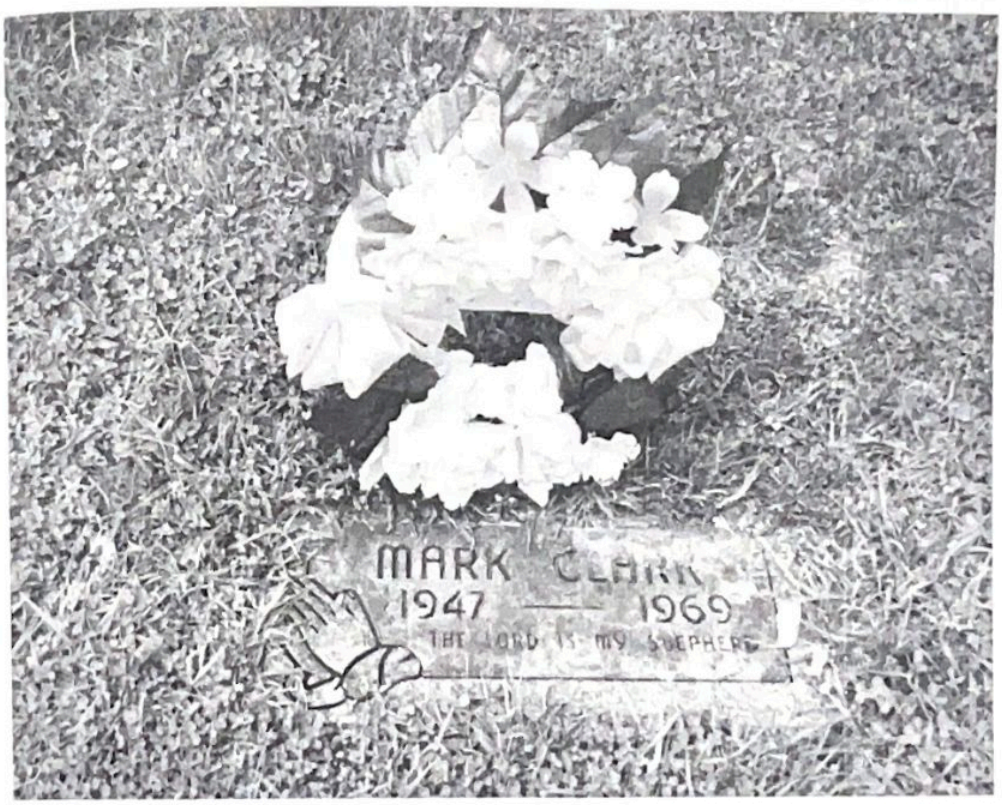
After nearly 40 years of negative media propaganda regarding the BPP, Defense Captain Mark Clark was finally recognized as a civil rights activist and was given his place in the African American Hall of Fame Museum in Peoria, Illinois, in 2011.
(African American Hall of Fame Award)



The Clark family also received recognitions and awards from Essence and Jet Magazine for Mark's contribution to civil rights.

Mark saw the injustice in this country and he did not turn away. He became his brother's keeper. He stood up for those who were oppressed. He gave his life fighting for civil rights. You can't give any more than that!

Mark's final resting place is at Springdale Cemetery in Peoria, Illinois. (Burial Site of Mark Clark)



Whenever I think of my dear brother Mark, I begin to understand why the BPP chose the "panther" as their mascot symbol. It stands for power and protection: It is a symbol of valor,

courage, and determination. That is exactly who Defense Captain Mark Clark was: Mark had the **soul** of a panther and his spirit will never die!

Defense Captain Mark Clark was a Black Panther Leader, an activist, and a dedicated revolutionary. He fought for civil rights to bring about political and social change in this country. He was a man who had the courage to stand up and speak truth to power even at the cost of his life.

Mark was more than just my brother: Mark was my friend. He had a keen sense of fairness and was a man of unwavering courage. Mark stood up for those who would not or could not stand up for themselves. Defense Captain Mark Clark was a true revolutionary!

17 Conclusion

Fifty years after the murders of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton, numerous black men and women have continued to be victims of racial profiling and have been murdered at the hands of the police.

Some of these officers have even been filmed in the act of murdering their victims by using excessive force, and in case after case, it was deemed justifiable homicide.

Over and over again, police officers who used excessive force to kill blacks got away with murder with little or no repercussions because of unjust and racially biased laws that protected them.

Make no mistake about it, the out-right murder of blacks at the hands of the police is still murder in God's eyes; and a threat to all decent Americans. Unless and until we all begin to recognize the truth of what is happening in America, our country will never truly be great.

Whenever the government begins using armed militia against its own citizens, no one is

safe or immune. Let us never forget what happened at Kent State University on May4, 1970, when members of the Ohio National Guard fired into a crowd of white students who were demonstrating against the War in Vietnam. Four of those students were killed and nine were wounded.

America has a deep soul searching work to do to change the trajectory of this country. No more sugarcoating the truth. No more pretending that racism doesn't exist. In order for white supremacy racism to end, we all must see it for what it is; evil and immoral.

History is not just what happened yesterday; history is what we do today that will determine the legacy that we leave for tomorrow. We must all demand that every law or legislation which promotes or perpetuates inhumane and immoral behavior be changed!

Therefore, it is incumbent upon all decent Americans who truly want to make America great to expose racism and discrimination wherever and whenever they see it!

As I look back and remember the determined, serious look that took over my brother Mark's face the day he recruited me into the Black Panther Party; I will never forget the words he spoke that still reverberate in my mind. His message is as clear today as it was then:

"There are many who will talk about the injustice in this country; but only a few will do something about it. Which one are you?"...
Mark Clark 1969 The End

If you enjoyed reading this book, then do me a kind favor? Please leave me a review at the bottom of my Amazon book page on Amazon.com Thank you!

If you have any questions or comments, I would love to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me using the contact form on our website: https://www.activistmarkclark.org.

Personal Interviews

Henry Howard: Henry was the oldest member of the San Francisco, California, Chapter and introduced Mark to the BPP. He is now 86 y/o. I have spoken to Henry on several occasions and he provided me with a vast amount of information regarding the original BPP as well as Mark's training in Chicago, Illinois, with Fred Hampton.

Pastor Felton Beck: Pastor Felton Beck attended my father's church and was a childhood friend of Mark's growing up. He provided an interesting story about Mark that captured the fearlessness and bravery of Mark.

Matthew Clark: My brother Matthew wrote a beautiful article titled, "Letter to a Panther," in 2006. It was posted in our original family website. Unfortunately, that website no longer exists but can be viewed in it's entirety at www.activistmarkclark.org.

All of these wonderful people provided a perspective that was instrumental in showing the soul of Mark Clark. I truly appreciate their cooperation and I thank each and every one of them for their contribution to making this book possible.

About The Author

Gloria Clark Jackson is the creator and web-designer of the website honoring her brother, Defense Captain Mark Clark of the original Black Panther Party. At the age of 18, Gloria joined the Black Panther Party under Mark's leadership. She was born in Peoria, Illinois, and witnessed Mark growing up as he became active in fighting discrimination during the 1960s. After the murders of her brother Mark and his comrade Fred Hampton in Chicago, Illinois, Gloria later decided to move to California. She attended Casa Loma College and Los Angeles Valley College and obtained her nursing degree to become a registered nurse. Gloria spent over 30 years in nursing, devoting her entire career to serving others. After retiring from nursing, she began developing her talents as an artist, writer, and web-designer. Gloria has four grown children, and a host of wonderful grandchildren. She is divorced and lives in Indianapolis, Indiana. Her website honoring Mark is at https://www.activistmarkclark.org.

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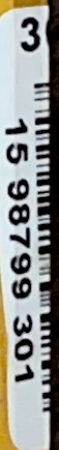
Basics Community News Service: Ten Point Program; October 22, 2016, by Guest Writer; https://basicsnews.org/bpp-ten-point-program/

Years after the murders of Mark Clark and Fred Hampton, we finally realize just how deep the rabbit hole went: Wire tapping; FBI informants; smear campaigns; and sadly, even assassinations. Yet, there are still many unanswered questions surrounding the deaths of Black Panther leaders Mark Clark and Fred Hampton. As the only living relative who was a member of the Black Panther Party under Mark's leadership, the author was privy to Party information. Now, she is sharing with the public her firsthand knowledge about her brother Mark; and reveals hidden information that may have been overlooked or covered up regarding their deaths. The author will take you on a journey into the life and death of Defense Captain Mark Clark of the original Black Panther Party. You will get a sneak peek into Mark's personal life growing up; revealing his personality, and above all, his dedication and unwavering commitment to the Party. The author accurately recounts why Mark was in Chicago on December 4, 1969, which consequently, led to his death. In this book, the author asks the hard questions that no one else wants to ask: Who were the other FBI informants?

Gloria Clark Jackson is the creator and web-designer of the website honoring her brother, Defense Captain Mark Clark of the original Black Panther Party. At the age of 18, Gloria joined the Black Panther Party under Mark's leadership. She was born in Peoria, Illinois, and witnessed Mark growing up as he became active in fighting discrimination during the 1960s. After the murders of her brother Mark and his comrade Fred Hampton in Chicago, Illinois, Gloria later decided to move to California. She attended Casa Loma College and Los Angeles Valley College and obtained her nursing degree to become a registered nurse. Gloria spent over 30 years in nursing, devoting her entire career to serving others. After retiring from nursing, she began developing her talents as an artist, writer, and web-designer. Gloria has four grown children, and a host of wonderful grandchildren. She is divorced and lives in Indianapolis, Indiana. Her website honoring Mark is at https://www.activistmarkclark.org.

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